

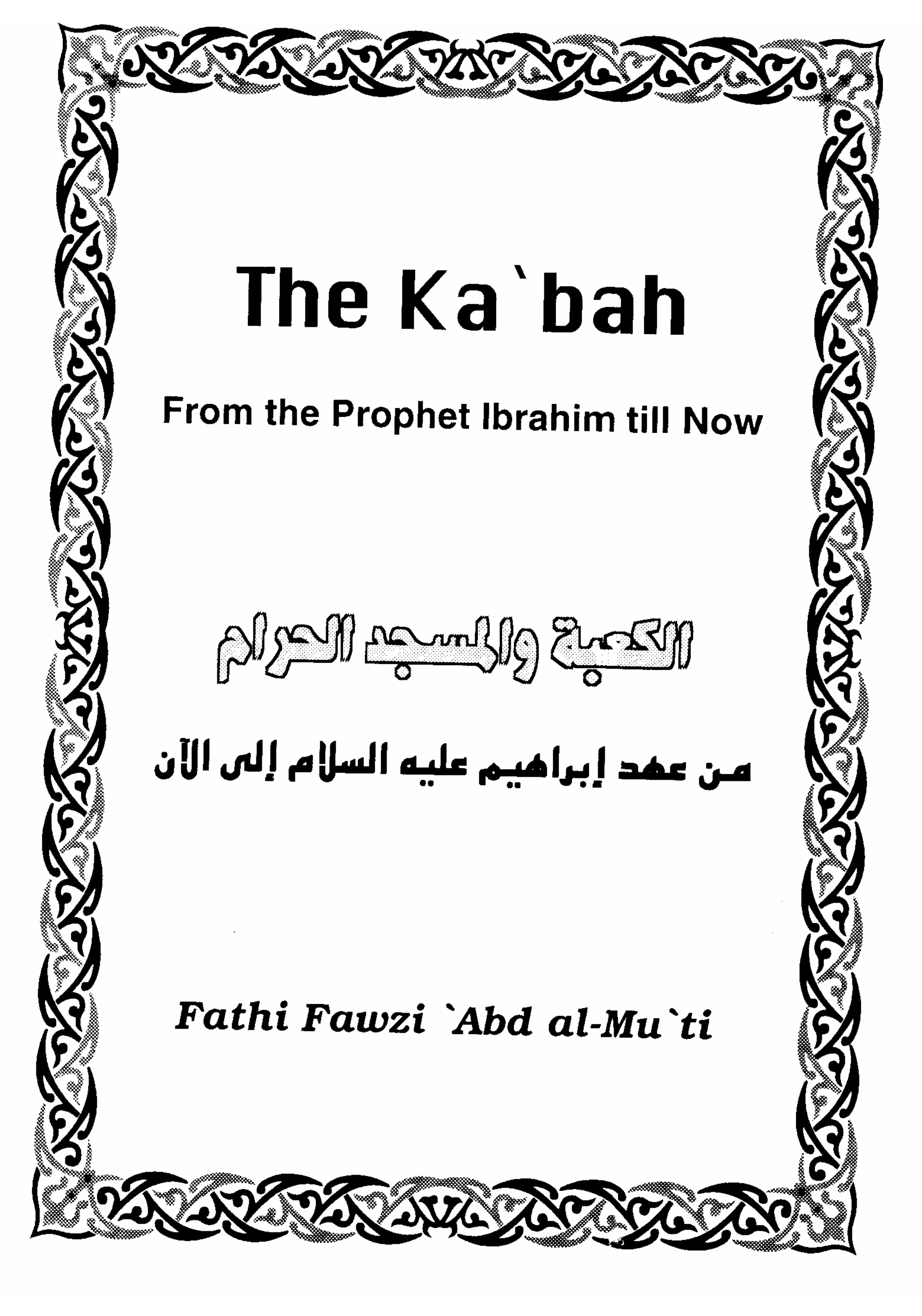
The Ka`bah

From the Prophet Ibrahim till Now

الكعبة والمسجد الحرام

من عهد إبراهيم عليه السلام إلى الآن

Fathi Fawazi` Abd al-Mu`ti



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Islamic INC.

For Publishing & Distribution

8 As-Sayeda Zainab Sq.

Cairo. Egypt

Fax: 3931475

Tel. 3911961-3900572

Post. No: 1636

دار التوزيع
والنشر الإسلامية

٨ ميدان السيدة زينب

القاهرة-مصر

فاكس: ٣٩٣١٤٧٥

ت: ٣٩١١٩٦١-٣٩٠٠٥٧٢

ص.ب ١٦٣٦

Translated, Edited and Prepared by:

Al-Falah Foundation

24 Tayaran st. Nasr city, Cairo, Egypt
Tel./ Fax: (202) 2622838
website: www.falahonline.com
E-mail: info@falahonline.com

ISBN: 977-265-471-7

رقم الإيداع: ٢٠٠٣/١٦٣٤٢

In the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful

﴾*Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Makkah), full of blessing, and a guidance for al-`Alamin (mankind and the jinn). In it are manifest signs (for example), the shrine of Ibrahim (Abraham); whosoever enters it attains security. And Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) to the House (Ka`bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses; and whoever disbelieves [i.e. denies Hajj, then he is a disbeliever of Allah], then Allah stands not in need of any of the `Alamin.*﴿

(Al-`Imran: 96-97)

﴾*Allah has made the Ka`bah, the Sacred House, an asylum of security and Hajj and `Umrah (minor pilgrimage) for mankind, and also the Sacred Month and the animals of offerings and the garlanded (people or animals, etc. marked with the garlands on their necks made from the outer part of the stem of the Makkah trees for their security), that you may know that Allah has knowledge of all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and that Allah is the All Knower of each and everything.*﴿

(Al-Ma'idah: 97)

" ... A prayer in the Sacred Mosque is better than 100,000 prayers elsewhere."

(A prophetic *hadith*)

Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Islamic Inc. for granting us such a great opportunity to translate this work and present it to our dear readers. We would like to thank the translators **Tal`at Faruq** and **Nirvan Tal`at** for their efforts in translating this precious book. Thanks should also be extended to **Naseema Mall, Ahmad M. Hasan** and **Reima Shakir** for revising and editing the work.

Since translation is an intricate task that requires much precision and dedication, we have exerted every effort to properly produce this precious work; however, perfection is only Divine. In addition, due to the delicate nature of the subject as well as the special style of the Arabic language, the translation in hand is not literal; our translators and revisers have exerted their best to render the text presentable and legible. On various occasions they have amended the Arabic text; paraphrasing, rearranging and summarizing it.

Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah, without Whose Help and Guidance nothing can be accomplished.

Al-Falah

Introduction

The following pages relate the history of the *Ka`bah* and the Sacred Mosque since the era of Ibrahim (peace be upon him) up till now. Throughout the book, I took some points into consideration, such as:

- The succession of the historical events that influenced the *Ka`bah* and the Sacred Mosque over forty centuries.
- Avoiding the opinions and narrations that were mentioned in the old books with no historical or religious references, or that are not compatible with logic or reason.
- Abiding by the narrative style, as far as I could, which represents a source of excitement through rich dialogues among the heroes. Furthermore, I tried to concentrate on the pivotal characters in order to maintain the succession of events.
- Acquainting the reader with information about the characters and places that have been mentioned in the book.

Almighty Allah is the Grantor of success.

Fathi Fawzi `Abd al-Mu`ti

(1)

Once, far back in time, daylight swept over a valley, bordered on the east by the red sea and the plains of Tehamah and Najd. Such a light illuminated the beauty and splendor of the valley with its mountain ranges. The events about to be unveiled were destined to go down in history through an event that still impacts on humanity even today. By the morning of this day, a man with a wife and son arrived at the valley on two (riding) camels. Then they dropped their saddlebags near a red mound.

The man was Ibrahim; the Intimate Friend of the Almighty, who was accompanied by his wife, Hajar, the Egyptian princess; Hajar the daughter of the Nile was a descendant of the Pharaohs, whom the King of Egypt had bestowed on Ibrahim. Ibrahim, in return, married Hajar and she, later, gave birth to Isma`il, whom Allah had made a source of happiness for the two parents. However, the Will of the Almighty had predestined an incident that made history. It was the Will of the Almighty that Ibrahim and his family of two members leave the land of Canaan and move to the barren valley, where nothing flourished except for some scattered thorny grass and isolated acacia. This area was always unfrequented. Even al-`Amaliq who used to camp in it for some days of the year, because of its wells and rare pastures, moved to a distant area.

The history of this region is quite controversial because it dates back to time immemorial. Moreover, the historians differed in opinion regarding its history. Some say that Adam, the Father of Humanity, inhabited this area one day, built a house there by order of his Lord and, then, circumambulated it. However, other historians claim that it dates back to two thousand years before the advent of Adam. They believe that it is the angels who had built the House of the Almighty in such an area, which lies at the center of the universe, in order that it be a *Qiblah*[1] for people on earth. Then, there emerged a third party claming that it is the prophet Idris who built or rebuilt the House of the Almighty.

As soon as they deposited their saddlebags near the red mound, which then still preserved the remains of the House, Hajar took in of her surroundings. Then, wonder and fear seized her, as within the range of her eyesight she could only see a bare valley surrounded by mountains. Unaware that she trod a land blessed by the Almighty, the desolate atmosphere hurled Hajar into fathomless despair. However, if the future events were revealed to her, she would have known that such a desolate place would be a source of joy for her and that Almighty Allah had bestowed on her, along with her son, a favor which no one else enjoyed. She would also have known that her story would go down in history.

Faith, insight and his wife's unconcealed dismay unveiled Hajar's thoughts to Ibrahim. Thus he said to her, "Do not fear, mother of Isma`il. You have already trod the Blessed land of the Almighty, so, have full confidence in Allah."

1. Direction to which Muslims turn in praying (toward the *Ka`bah*).

Then, day passed and the dark curtain of night cascaded increasing the sense of gloom and desolation. The next morning, Ibrahim headed towards his (riding) camel, preparing for his journey back to his homeland of Canaan. Then he turned to Hajar and said, "I leave you and your son in Allah's keeping, O Hajar, and I hope to return to you as soon as Allah permits it."

With unceasing tears trickling down her cheeks, Hajar, stammering, implored, "O Ibrahim, would you leave us to suffer loneliness and desolation!" He answered, "May the Lord guard and protect you both." She went on questioning, "Did your Lord order you to do so, O Intimate Friend of Allah?" He replied, "I dare do nothing except what my Lord orders me to do." She continued, "And what about your only son, the apple of our eyes, whom Allah has bestowed upon you after a yearning thirst for parenthood!"

He responded with confidence, "The Lord will protect, safeguard and make (out of) him a great nation. Also, his offspring will be blessed."

Only then, Hajar said, "Then, Allah will not abandon us." Surprisingly, the suckling Isma`il returned his father's gaze, who kept looking at him while moving away. Hajar cast a tender eye at her husband while escorting him. Almighty Allah alone knew how great was Hajar's sorrow that almost rent her heart. It was so great that she even thought of clinging to the hem of Ibrahim's garment to prevent him from leaving. However, she knew that she could do nothing but to bid him farewell, "Invoke your Lord. Ibrahim, as you are His Prophet and Intimate Friend. Ask Him to grant us peace and safety."

Ibrahim set out and fading out of sight, he gave his wife and his son a farewell look and then turned his gaze to the heaven invoking his Lord, ﴾ *O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in an uncultivable valley by Your Sacred House (the Ka`bah at Makkah); in order, O our Lord, that they may perform As-Salat (prayers), so fill some hearts among men with love towards them, and (O Allah) provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks.* ﴿ (Ibrahim: 37).

(2)

The day and the night passed, and by the next daybreak, Hajar was awoken by the piercing cries of her baby, Isma`il. His cries filled her heart with grief as she, through her maternal instinct, knew that he was thirsty. She hastened to the (water) skin, but to her great sorrow, she found it empty; there was not even a drop of water in it. The cries of her only child terrified her, while the baby kicked the air desperately with his little legs affirming his thirst!

Hajar experienced a grueling time during her search for water! She searched frantically, but found nothing around except the land covered by sand and the rocks scattered as far as her eyes could see. She was desperate, as she knew that water could never spring out of such a land. Looking all around her, she found herself enveloped in a vast wilderness, as if the whole world was turned into an enormous desert. In this moment of agony, Hajar wistfully wished that she could return to Egypt, where she could scoop a hand of fresh water out of the Nile with which to gratify her baby's thirst. But, how far Egypt was then! It was even painful to dream of the long arduous journey to Egypt.

Hajar kept looking around for water. Wrapped in silence, she headed for as-Safa (mountain) gazing at the horizon with the hope that she might see a caravan. Overcome with anxiety, she

could do nothing but invoke her Lord to send down rain or to guide her to find a well so as to quench the thirst of her infant. Then, to her surprise, she saw something far at al-Marwah (mountain), which she seemed to be a pool of water. Despite her exhaustion and grief. she hurried towards it.

She alternately jogged and ran until she reached there, but to her disappointment, what she thought was a pool of water was only a mirage and so, her grief was aggravated. At that moment, the question that puzzled her much was: why did her husband leave her alone in such a wasteland? Why did her husband leave her to struggle with the surrounding arid nature and the scorching heat of the sun? Looking around, she felt that she could do nothing but to supplicate to Allah. However, her eyes suddenly fell upon a spot of water at as-Safa and, thus, she hurried towards it hoping that Allah answered her invocation. Yet, when she reached there, she realized that it was nothing but a mirage again. Hours passed, while Hajar breathlessly, was either running or jogging from as-Safa to al-Marwah and vice versa. Though the scorching sun seared her face and the burning sand made her feet bleed, she ran the distance between as-Safa and al-Marwah seven times.

May Allah bless you Hajar. You spent your childhood and youth in Egypt, the land of the Nile. There, you enjoyed the clear and fresh water of the Nile, the shining sun and the gentle breeze. Then you lived with your husband, Ibrahim in the Levant, between the lovely lawns and gardens and the fresh air. How then could you be destined to suffer the pain of loneliness and alienation and the cruel nature that has no plant or water?

While the baby continued to cry, Hajar wiped the tears from her eyes and went on invoking her Lord. Then, she, staggering from exhaustion, returned to her baby. Wavering between hope and despair, she decided to stay by his side and wait for the Almighty's Providence. However, when she reached the baby, she was surprised by his calm appearance. She hugged, kissed and caressed him. And when she looked beside him, she found water streaming down his feet. She quickly scooped the water and gave the baby to drink. Only then, she smiled contentedly. Overwhelmed by ecstasy, she praised her Lord for the generosity conferred upon her. She believed that without the favor Allah had granted her, she would have lost her only child.

As water continued to flow incessantly, covering a large area, Hajar, for fear that it might be swallowed in the sandy soil, started to encircle the spring with sand.

All that she hoped for was to keep the water for some days, not knowing that this same spring will continue to flow over thousands of years to satisfy the thirst of the pilgrims who will come to visit the House of the Lord.

However, she was greatly pleased with the water of Zamzam (the name given to the spring). Her joy over the belief that Allah will not abandon her was much greater. For sure, the Almighty has answered her and her husband's invocation.

Time passed and one day, while Hajar was sitting with her child Isma`il, showering him with her tender maternal love and kindness, a group of men approached. They told her that they belong to the tribe of Jurhum and that they were on their way from Yemen to the Levant, when they, unexpectedly, saw some birds hovering over the region - where she was. Knowing that it

is unusual to see birds in such an arid and barren region, they followed the birds until they reached that little oasis where the spring of Zamzam had infused life. They were greatly satisfied to find a place where to rest during their long and exhausting journey.

At first, Hajar felt apprehensive when she saw them, but her firm belief in the Almighty and His Will expelled all traces of apprehension.

One of the group addressed her, "May you allow us to rest here Madam, as we are exhausted by the long travel?" Being the wife of Ibrahim, the Intimate Friend of the Almighty, who was known as the most hospitable of all hosts, she welcomed the guests and gave them of what Allah had endowed her with food and water. Then, some of the group went on in their journey, while some others settled in the region, establishing the first community of that region. It was their pleasant company that ended Hajar's loneliness and which Hajar believed that Allah sent to her as a favor; she knew it was the Grace of Allah, which He brings to whomsoever He decides.

(3)

By the passing of time, this small society started to grow. The region, once devoid of any sort of life was now a surge of activity. They also cultivated part of the area surrounding the red mound, nourishing it with the water of Zamzam. Isma`il grew among these people, the tribe of Jurhum; he learnt their language and ways of hunting. Later on, it happened that Ibrahim, driven by nostalgia and yearning, came from the Levant to Makkah to see his wife and child. And he experienced immense pleasure when he saw his little family in such a good state. Then, he praised the Almighty for His Grace and Favors.

Near the Well of Zamzam, Ibrahim sought rest in the shade of a tree planted by his son, Isma`il and started to reminisce over the past ninety years of his life. He remembered his affairs with his people, who, once, tied him up and then cast him in the fire because he had destroyed their idols and called them to worship Allah alone. He also remembered how the Almighty made the fire cool and peaceful for him. He recalled his migration from his homeland (in the land of the Chaldea) heading, along with his wife, towards the west and what had befallen him in the land of Canaan. He also remembered what happened to him in Egypt - the Egyptian king had gifted him with Hajar, whom he married and who gave birth to his firstborn child, Isma`il. The chain of

memories drifted in the mind of the old man, Ibrahim, who was resting in the shade of the tree.

When he felt thirsty, he went to the Well of Zamzam, scooped up a handful of water and drank until he felt satiated. Then, he returned to the tree and continued his recollection of old memories. After a while, he fell asleep and heard a caller addressing him, "O Ibrahim, Allah orders you to slay your son, as a sacrifice for Him."

Ibrahim was awoken by a cool breeze with the words of the caller beating in his head like a hammer. The voice was familiar to him; in fact he knew it well. It was the same voice he had heard when an-Namrud, the king, set a fire for him, "O fire, be coolness and peace upon Ibrahim." It was also the voice which brought him the glad tidings that in the near future, he would have Is-haq and then following him, Ya`qub. However, it was heart-rending for Ibrahim; how can a father slay his firstborn son!

How burdensome was the order for the old man! How grievous was it for him to kill his son by his (own) hands! Moreover, how can Hajar, the mother, withstand the killing of her son! All these thoughts were so painful that they almost broke the heart of the old man. However, he could do nothing but surrender to the command of his Lord, and invoke Him to grant him and his wife serenity.

Ibrahim, overburdened by painful thoughts, was stumbling in his way to find Isma`il. At the same time, Isma`il appeared heading towards his father. Then, the father hugged and kissed his son as if he were bidding him farewell. It was inevitable that Ibrahim inform his son of what he had to do in fulfillment of

what Allah had ordered him. Yet, he found it distressing and he failed to tell him. All he could do was to agree with his son on going out for hunting, (as some historians claim) or to gather firewood. As they accompanied each other towards the mountain (Thabir), Ibrahim carried with him a rope and a knife. The old man's steps were painstakingly slow, as he was overburdened with the agonizing thought of killing his son. On their way, they met a man in an Arabian dress. The man took Ibrahim aside and said to him, "O reverend sheikh, how can you afford slaying your son, the apple of your eye?! Was it not enough to abandon him and his mother in such a then desolate region, for you to come and slay him today?!"

Ibrahim knew his addressee; it was Satan in disguise.

He knew that Satan was trying to divert him from fulfilling the order of the Lord. Ibrahim was not surprised, as it was the habit of Satan to insinuate evil to mankind. It was he (Satan) who refused to prostrate himself to Adam, boasted and harbored a grudge against Adam because of what the Almighty had bestowed on the latter. Thus, he promised saying, ﴿*Indeed I shall definitely ordain for them in the earth, and indeed I shall definitely misguide them all together. Except Your bondmen among them, who are ever faithful.*﴾ (Al-Hijr: 39-40)

And as Ibrahim was among the ever faithful bondmen to the Almighty, he (resisting the temptation of Satan) picked up a stone and threw it in the face of Satan, saying, "Be gone, enemy of Allah, surely, I can do nothing but surrender to the Will of my Lord." However, Satan tried to tempt him again, approaching him from the right, from the left, from behind and in front of him. But every time he approached, Ibrahim would throw a

stone at Satan. This process continued seven times until Satan disappeared, then, Ibrahim and Isma`il went on in their way. After a while, Satan reappeared (trying to misguide Ibrahim) and Ibrahim threw seven stones at him causing him to disappear again. Satan appeared for the final time but Ibrahim's seven stones made him disappear. Ibrahim never failed to recognize Satan, even though he assumed a different guise each time. Ibrahim and his son continued on their way to the mountain of Thabir, which was an arduous journey for both of them. When they reached the mountain, Ibrahim addressed his son tenderly and with firm faith in Allah, ﴿*O my son, surely I saw in a dream that I shall slay you; so, look, what do you see?*﴾ (As-Saffat: 102).

It is significant and historic that the reverence of parenthood, the confidence of sonship, the depth of belief and sincerity of intention reached their peak. Isma`il, fearless and confident, replied, ﴿*O my (dear) father, perform whatsoever you are commanded.*﴾ (As-Saffat: 102)

A moment of silence and a surge of emotions passed before Ibrahim started to perform the command. It seemed as if Isma`il perceived his father's thoughts. Afraid that his father may resist the command of his Lord, the sincere son said, ﴿*You shall soon find me, in case Allah (so) decides, among the patient (ones).*﴾ (As-Saffat: 102)

Thusly, Ibrahim tied up his son, raised the knife and directed it towards his neck! In doing so, Ibrahim was not devoid of parental affection and Isma`il, in his submission to his father, was not benumbed; Yet, it was comfort, which spread its wings over the old man and his son. Ibrahim pressed the knife against the neck of Isma`il but it did not cut. Isma`il felt that it was his

father's parental feeling which prevented him from fulfilling the command of his Lord and, thus, said, "O (dear) father, if you fear that parental affection may prevent you from fulfilling the Command of your Lord when look at me, then, turn me on my face and tighten the rope around me, so that I am not restive."

Isma`il kept silent for a while, during which he tried to read his father's emotions through his facial expression, and then he said, "(O father) Sharpen your knife and quickly cut me in the neck."

Isma`il continued, "And move my clothes away so that they would not be stained with blood; as it would grieve my mother much to see the blood on my clothes."

Ibrahim was silenced by the tears that trickled down his beard, while Isma`il went on, "Then, when you see my mother, send her my salutation and give her my shirt in order that it might be a consolation to her." Ibrahim raised the knife and started to press its blade against the neck of his son. However, the knife did not cut, as if it were hindered by something. It seemed to lose its sharpness just as the fire had lost its burning heat before and transformed into peace and cool upon Ibrahim. While Isma`il was willingly submitting to the Will of the Almighty and obeying (the order of) his father, Ibrahim remained puzzled, and then suddenly heard a voice calling him amid the silent valley, ﴿*You have fulfilled the dream (vision).*﴾ (As-Saffat: 105).

Ibrahim turned around searching for the source of the voice but to no avail. It was the same voice that had called him to slay his son. The voice continued, ﴿*Verily! Thus do We reward the Muhsinun (good-doers).*﴾ (As-Saffat: 105).

Before Ibrahim could regain his confidence and dispel his confusion, the voice uttered, ﴿*And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice (i.e. a ram)*﴾ (As-Saffat: 107).

Ibrahim, immediately, spread out his hands to the sky, humbly thanking Almighty Allah. At this moment, a ram descended from the top of the mountain; it was the ransom for his son. Thus, Ibrahim slew the ram and, then, moved towards his son and released him. They were both overwhelmed with joy; the joy of obedience (to Allah), patience and faith and joy over the ransom which was a sign of Allah's satisfaction. Thereafter, they both went on their way home (to Makkah).

(4)

Later on, Ibrahim returned to Habrun in Canaan where he had left his wife Sarah. He came to find that Allah, the Almighty, had bestowed her a son, Is-haq, after her long sterility; it was a sign of the Almighty's Wisdom and Will. On the other side, Hajar and Isma`il remained in the valley (in Makkah). The stream of life ran and Isma`il reached full age and matured. However, he kept his promise to his father, i.e. he persisted in reading the Scriptures of his father and explaining its contents to the coexisting people of Jurhum. He also learned the language of Jurhum, besides learning hunting and riding tame horses. In addition, he attained a high status among his people.

One day, when dawn broke over the Blessed Land, Isma`il prepared himself to go hunting while his mother turned to her Lord and started prayer, supplicating to Him with the words (invocation) Ibrahim had taught her. Then, when she finished her prayer, she leaned on her arbor and directed her gaze towards the Well of Zamzam. She started to recall her life in the valley and, then, turned towards the red mound nearby. While recollecting images of her past life (in the valley), fell asleep and dreamt that a tree grew amidst the red mound. The tree was laden with fruit and was aloft, with its branches mounting

towards the sky. The root of the tree was firm while its branches were in the Heaven. As the shade of the tree carved a large area, some people took shelter in it, enjoying the gentle breeze and the sweet smelling flowers. She was greatly pleased, especially with the white birds hovering over, or perching on the branches of the tree. The birds were either picking seed or sipping water. The whole vision was reminiscent of her homeland - Egypt. Hajar woke at the voice of Isma`il informing her of his father's arrival. How overjoyed she was to meet her loved one after his long absence. Despite being used to the intermittent visits of Ibrahim, Hajar eagerly and happily received him every time he came; not surprisingly, as he was her husband, the father of her single son, and above all, the Prophet and Intimate Friend of the Almighty. On his part, Ibrahim would be pleased to visit Hajar and Isma`il. The place also provided him with a peculiar redolence that he did not find in all the places he trod, including his homeland in the land of Ur, the land of Canaan and Egypt. It seemed as if nostalgia drew him towards that blessed place, oblivious that it would go down in history through an unforgettable event.

No sooner had Isma`il seen his father than he put aside an arrow, which he was mending before, and hurried towards him. They approached each other, both absorbed in reminiscence, while Hajar told Ibrahim about the dream (or the vision) that she had dreamt a moment before. Ibrahim was greatly pleased by the sight of his wife, his son, and with the people of Jurhum, who believed in Allah. Something else, however, for which he came, pleased him the most (i.e. building the House). Taking rest after the toiling journey, Ibrahim addressed his son, "O Isma`il. Allah has ordered me to build a house for Him." Isma`il immediately replied, "Then, obey the order of your Lord." So, Ibrahim

pointed at the red mound that was not far from the Well of Zamzam and said, "There, over that red mound; and you should help me." Overwhelmed by happiness, Isma`il answered, "Then, go on (father), and you will find in me a (good) helper."

Ibrahim and Isma`il commenced their work by removing the remains (of the old building) over the red mound, so that the (old) foundations of the House built by Adam (or the angels) appeared. These foundations were quite deep-rooted. Therefore, they set out to gather stones, supported by the people who embraced the religion of Ibrahim (Islam), read the Scriptures, followed its teachings, and believed in his Lord.

They were gathering stones from different directions; from the Mountains of Hira', Qubays and some others that surrounded the area (where they lived). With Ibrahim building and Isma`il passing the stones to him, the building rose with every passing day. The House reached between thirty and thirty-one cubits in length, and twenty-one cubits in width. Hajar was happy with what her husband and son were doing as if the vision of the soaring, shady and fruitful tree she saw, one day, in her sleep was coming true. She was also helping her husband and her son by providing them with food and bringing them water from the Well of Zamzam. Her happiness would increase whenever she heard her husband and son joyfully and humbly repeat their invocation, ﴾*Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.*﴿ (Al-Baqarah: 127) Besides, any one who heard Ibrahim invoking his Lord, "My Lord, make this city (Makkah) a place of security and provide its people with fruits," would get pleased. Moreover, when the building rose high, Ibrahim brought a stone and stepped over it in order

to continue his work until the height of the building reached between seven and nine cubits. He did not roof the building, and made (only) two doors in it; one in the direction of the Well of Zamzam and the other in the opposite direction.

Upon its completion, Ibrahim observed the building and found a slot for a stone empty and, thus, addressed Isma`il, "O Isma`il, go bring us a stone in order that I make it a sign for the people."

Isma`il went on searching for a stone and Ibrahim waited for him for a long time. Ibrahim started to worry about his son. He knew not that it was the Will of Allah for Isma`il to be delayed. Suddenly, Jibril descended and gave Ibrahim the Black Stone that had been preserved in the Mountain of Qubays when the deluge of the Prophet Nuh flooded the earth. Then, Ibrahim placed the Black Stone in its appointed slot. When Isma`il returned, he was surprised and said, "O (dear) father! Who did bring you that stone?!"

Ibrahim answered faithfully, "It was the One Who entrusted it to no one other than Himself, that brought it to me."

Both Ibrahim and Isma`il were happy to finish the construction of the House of the Lord, as they, then, fulfilled their promise to Allah. They supplicated to Him aloud, ﴾*Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.*﴿ (Al-Baqarah: 127).

Furthermore, Ibrahim heard a voice calling him, ﴾*And proclaim to mankind the Hajj (pilgrimage). They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, they will come from every deep and distant (wide) mountain highway (to perform Hajj).*﴿ (Al-Hajj: 27).

Ibrahim was astonished and bewildered. How could he announce the pilgrimage to mankind while he was in such a remote desert?! And, if he did, who would hear him?! Then, a voice called him, "You announce, and it is Us to convey (the announcement)."

Hence, Ibrahim ascended the stone and turned towards Yemen in the South and called, "O mankind! Pilgrimage to the House of Allah has been prescribed for you. O worshippers of Allah, the Almighty has built a House for you. So, go to it for pilgrimage and respond to (the call of) the caller."

To his surprise, he heard voices respond to his call saying, "I respond to Your Call O Allah ... I respond to Your Call and I am obedient to Your Orders, You have no partner ... I respond to Your Call. All the praises and blessings are for You ... All the sovereignty is for You, and You have no partners with you."

Then, he turned towards the East and repeated his call, then, to the West and, then, to the Levant. Each time he invited people to perform pilgrimage, he would hear voices responding to his call, "I respond to Your Call O Allah ... I respond to Your Call and I am obedient to Your Orders, You have no partner ..."

Voices crescendoed in response while Ibrahim was looking at the House, which he built, feeling that light was spreading throughout it. As the voices continued to rise like hymns in the heavens, Ibrahim's faith in the Almighty reduced him to tears; he acknowledged the Ability of Allah. All the people who witnessed that angelic event were also reduced to tears.

Then, Ibrahim invoked his Lord, ﴿*Our Lord! And make us submissive unto You and of our offspring a nation submissive unto*

You, and show us our Manasik (all the ceremonies of pilgrimage), and accept our repentance. Truly, You are the One Who accepts repentance, the Most Merciful. Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall recite unto them Your Verses and instruct them in the Book (this Qur'an) and al-Hikmah (full knowledge of the Islamic laws and jurisprudence or wisdom or Prophethood, etc.), and sanctify them. Verily! You are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 128-129)

Answering the call of His Intimate Friend Ibrahim, Almighty Allah sent Jibril to guide him to the rituals of pilgrimage. So, Jibril took Ibrahim and his companions, on the day of *Tarwiyah*[1], to Mina where he led them in prayer. Then, when the morning shone forth, they headed towards (the Mountain of) `Arafat. And when the sun was about to set they went to al-Muzdalifah. Afterwards, when dawn broke, they pressed on to Mina, where they threw pebbles at Satan, then they offered a sacrifice (to Allah) and headed for the House of Allah where they circumambulated (the House) seven times. They also performed *Sa`i* (hastening) seven times between as-Safa and al-Marwah (two mountains). Hajar might have recollected the reminiscent of the day in which she was hastening between as-Safa and al-Marwah seeking water for her (thirsty) child. Her happiness must have been immeasurable; performing hastening as one of the rites of pilgrimage. Thus, how great is Allah's honoring of her.

1. The 8^{th} day of Dhu al-Hijjah.

(5)

The silver touch of dawn spread over Makkah and the surrounding areas - over mountains, plateaus, mounds and plains. Hajar woke and moved to her place of prayer, where she supplicated and thanked Allah. Then, she sat and attentively observed the House, which her husband and son built according to the Ordinance of the Almighty. She beheld two white doves hovering over the House and then perching in the courtyard of the Mosque. The doves were happy with their safety and freedom, as they picked seeds and sipped water. It seemed as if they came to perfect the image which she had envisioned one day while asleep. It also seemed as if these two doves arrived at the House of Allah to declare peace and safety within its borders. Were they not the doves that one-day conveyed glad tidings to the people on board the Ark of the prophet Nuh (peace be upon him)?

The sun rose, descending upon the House of Allah a silver halo, increasing its glow and splendor. Hajar looked around and felt happy. She viewed houses and tents scattered over the foothills of Makkah and the girls of Jurhum approaching the Well of Zamzam to fill their vessels with water. They were in the first flush of youth. They were striding along the road, smiling contentedly while submerging their vessels into the

Well. When their vessels were filled, they would carry them and return home, either through the gorges or through the foothills of Makkah, expressing their happiness with song on their way home.

Hajar remembered her husband Ibrahim, who had left Makkah, heading towards the land of Habrun, where his wife Sarah, his son Is-haq and his two grandsons, `Isu and Ya`qub lived. He also left his son Isma`il in Makkah to manage the affairs of the House, teach people the Scriptures and serve the pilgrims who came in droves to the House of Allah in compliance with the call Allah made through his Messenger and Intimate Friend, Ibrahim.

Watching the pilgrims at the *Ka`bah* supplicating, circumambulating, bowing down or prostrating augmented Hajar's happiness. They were reciting supplications and the words of *Talbiyah*[1], which never ceased in the House. She would also derive pleasure from staying with her grandsons, the children of Isma`il (including Nabit, Qidar, Dawmah, Butur ...) instructing them in religious teachings and relating to them the glories of Egypt; its Nile, Pyramids and civilization.

One day, Hajar leaned on her arbor and turned her gaze towards the *Ka`bah*. She was contemplating the Grace of Allah upon her, a satisfied smile resting upon her face. Then, she closed her eyes and breathed her last. Isma`il moved towards his mother, his eyes blurred with tears, unstoppable tears. All the people in Makkah wept over the death of Hajar, the chaste mother of the nation that would go down in history as long as

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1. *Talbiyah* is the reciting of the following words: "I respond to Your Call O Allah ... I respond to Your Call and I am obedient to Your Orders, You have no partner ..."

Allah permits it. Her son buried her in the *Hijr*[1] of Isma`il. Hajar's death, to people in Makkah, was like a waning star, leaving behind sweet-smelling memories. However, death is a part of life that Allah has decreed for mankind. Ibrahim grieved over the death of his wife, Hajar. He came to Makkah from the Levant in order to offer consolation to his family and to reminisce over his wife in the House of Allah. Was it not Hajar that accepted, with great satisfaction, the Ordinance of Allah that Ibrahim leave her and her son, Isma`il in a valley uncultivated? Did she not willingly and thankfully bear such a harsh life? Was it not her that dismissed the whisperings of Satan, informing her that her husband had intended to slay her son, and then, gave Ibrahim a helping hand in building the *Ka`bah*? Recollecting such memories, Ibrahim found it was inevitable to supplicate to Allah in favor of her, asking Him to shower her with His Mercy. While he was at the *Ka`bah*, he hoped that her memory would be a solace to him.

1. A chamber exists in the Northern wall of the Ka`bah.

(6)

Isma`il and his children in Makkah maintained relations with Is-haq and his two sons, `Isu and Ya`qub in the Levant. The ties of kinship were strengthened by exchanging visits. `Isu, the son of Is-haq, strengthened the family ties by marrying the daughter of Isma`il, Mahillah. Now and again, Ibrahim would come to Makkah to circumambulate the House. Isma`il, on his part, would travel to the Levant to visit his father, his brother and his nephews.

One day, when Isma`il went to Habrun to visit his father Ibrahim, he found him sick. Isma`il was destined to witness the death of his father, after he (Ibrahim) had fulfilled the mission with which Allah entrusted him. Ibrahim spread the teachings of the religion of monotheism, justice and peace. He was buried in the land of Habrun - at the farm of Makfilah - next to his wife (Sarah). However, sweet memories of him circulated in Egypt, the Levant and al-Hijaz and went down in history.

Almighty Allah says, ﴿*And this (submission to Allah; Islam) was enjoined by Ibrahim upon his sons and by Ya`qub, (saying), 'O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the Faith of Islam.'*﴾ (Al-Baqarah: 132).

When the people of Makkah learnt of Ibrahim's death, they wept - another star in the history of Makkah had waned; following his wife Hajar. Then Isma`il took charge of the affairs in the Ka`bah, looked after the pilgrims, and shouldered the responsibility of disseminating the call of his father Ibrahim, in al-Hijaz, Yemen and the vicinity. Every now and then, he would journey to these places. He also asked his children to propagate the teachings of their grandfather and the principles of the upright call. Thus, Isma`il and his children circulated, from what they had knowledge of, the Arabic language and the information they had learned from their grandfather, Ibrahim, including what he had taught them of the Egyptian civilization by the Nile valley.

Makkah and the Inviolable House of the Almighty attained increasing significance. In addition, Isma`il dressed the *Ka`bah* (with a covering) for the first time. The number of tents increased throughout Makkah. Also, the number of sheep increased, as they were grazing in the desert. The Well of Zamzam drew many tribes to the region, seeking its blessed water that would quench their thirst and cure their illness.

Makkah witnessed a noticeable boom. Isma`il and his children tamed horses, using them in travel as well as in hunting. Later, these horses attained a widespread reputation. Peace and bliss overwhelmed Makkah and its people. The frequent visits of the pilgrims turned Makkah into a thriving town. The House of Allah was enveloped in Divine Light with the pilgrims raising their voices with the words of *Talbiyah*, prayers and supplications. Then, by the end of pilgrimage, people went back to their tribes, where they mentioned the House of Allah and the people of Makkah in good words and preached (to their tribes) the teachings of Ibrahim, i.e. love, peace and monotheism.

On one of the days when Makkah was crowded with pilgrims, Isma`il sat in his tent near the *Ka`bah* unable to go out due to his ill health. He was senile and so debilitated by old age that he remained in his tent uttering the words repeated by the pilgrims performing circumambulation. Their words of *Talbiyah* would please him as it brought him dear memories. Although, his children, aggrieved by his condition, gathered around their father; Isma`il ordered them to accompany the pilgrims during their performance of the rites. His son, Nabit led the pilgrims until they went through all the rites. Therefore, they returned to their father who was greatly pleased, partly, because of seeing them and, partly, because of the prevalence of Allah's Religion. At this moment, Isma`il breathed his last while his face retained a broad smile. His children buried him beside his mother. Thus, Makkah, by the death of Isma`il, lost the last of her three stars; Hajar, Ibrahim, and then Isma`il!

(7)

It is predestined that the events weave the course of history. These events are an interaction between people and destiny. It always happens that man stands helpless before destiny, having no power to prevent it. Therefore, he accepts it, not out of weakness or negligence, but out of a wisdom known by the Almighty. History records such events as long as there is a world living. Hence, when we recollect such events, we analyze them and then rewrite them not according to our personal perceptions, but according to what had really happened to the people involved!

The status of the *Ka`bah* has influenced its history. It lured many tribes living in the neighborhood to try to usurp leadership from the children of Isma`il. Among these tribes was the tribe of Jurhum who inhabited the area of Qu'ayqi'an, at the northern borders of Makkah. They were driven by their large numbers and urge for power. They were also encouraged by the fact that they were the first inhabitants of Makkah (after Hajar's arrival) and Isma`il married from their tribe, `Atikah bint `Amr al-Jurhumi. Furthermore, they had a well-experienced leader, Madad ibn `Amr, who was acquainted, through frequent visits, with the affairs of the Levant, Iraq and Egypt. Thus, he hoped to set up a powerful state of which Makkah would be its center.

Another tribe was that of Qatura', descendants of al-`Amaliq, who were settled in the west of Makkah and used to frequent the valley of Makkah for some days every year. In these days, they would graze their camels and sheep. They believed that they were more entitled to leadership. Besides, their chief, as-Samayda' ibn 'Imliq was a courageous and well-experienced person.

The third tribe was Khuza'ah who dwelled in Tihamah, waiting for an opportunity to seize the leadership of Makkah.

On the other hand, Qidar ibn Isma`il, who succeeded his brother Nabit in running the affairs of the *Ka`bah*, was too old and weak to manage it well. Thus, he transferred custody to his (maternal) cousins, the tribe of Jurhum, who - wasting not the opportunity - imposed a decimal tax on the trade coming from North Makkah. The descendants of al-`Amaliq harbored a grudge against the tribe of Jurhum for what they had gained of money and what they had assumed of honor by their guardianship over the *Ka`bah*. Such malice bred mutual hostility between the two parties; Jurhum and al-`Amaliq, which entailed competition, controversy and conflict. This tense relationship moved the leader of the descendants of al-`Amaliq to impose a similar tax on the trade coming to Makkah from the south.

The situation intensified when, one day, Jurhum and the descendants of al-`Amaliq were vilifying each other. Each one was boasting (in the *Ka`bah*) and attesting lineage to Nuh (peace be upon him). Then, the descendants of al-`Amaliq claimed that they are the offspring of the angels. Soon a war broke out between the two parties, in the *Ka`bah*, during which Madad al-Jurhumi killed as-Samayda'. Hence, the *Ka`bah* turned into a

battlefield on which a lot of blood was shed. The number of pilgrims decreased dramatically for they feared for their lives and wealth. People wished that the light of the Almighty would shine in the hearts of the fighting parties, guiding them back to the right path.

For their mischief, Allah decreed that His Wrath be inflicted on the people; thus, a violent torrent of rain flooded their lands, tents, and goods and, also, caused cracks in the walls of the *Ka`bah*. It was a trial for the people, so that they might learn the lesson. It was hoped that light might dawn and dispel all the clouds of mist and darkness. The children of Isma`il grieved over the misfortune that befell the people and the *Ka`bah*. They might have been regretful for relinquishing leadership to Banu Jurhum. In the meantime, they were obliged to take a neutral stand to avoid a blood bath. Thus, as they gathered to take counsel, some of them said, "This is the House which Ibrahim and Isma`il built; and this is the Well of Zamzam, Almighty Allah caused its water to gush out for Hajar, as a kind of mercy towards (her son) Isma`il ... And this is Makkah, which was, until a very recent time, a desolate wasteland. However, it has turned, thanks to the Well of Zamzam and the House of Allah, into an oasis full of inhabitants and crowded with pilgrims who come to answer the Call of the Almighty uttered by His Prophet and Intimate Friend, Ibrahim. Hence, no one should assume responsibility for such affairs but the children of Isma`il." While some others retorted, "As it is the Inviolable House of Allah, there should be no shedding of blood in it. Surely, the Almighty has made it a secure sanctuary." In addition, a third team declared, "Besides the fact that we, being the children of Isma`il, are more entitled to assume responsibility for the House (of

Allah) and the pilgrims, there is a maternal affinity between us and the tribe of Jurhum; Isma`il's wife `Atikah belongs to the tribe of Jurhum. Through this marital bond with the tribe of Jurhum, we do not want to sever such ties." Following this, children of Isma`il relinquished leadership to al-Harith ibn Madad. They were not driven by weakness or languish; rather, it was their desire to prevent bloodshed in the House of Allah that moved them to relinquish leadership. They respected the affinity of kinship and marital relations. Moreover, the children of Isma`il effected a reconciliation between the tribe of Jurhum and the descendants of al-`Amaliq, who had retreated (from the battlefield) after the death of their leader, as-Samayda'. However, the tribe of Jurhum misused rulership. The only good deed that they are noted for was for restoring and raising the walls of the *Ka`bah* after they had been damaged by the torrential rains. Aside from that, they spread corruption in Makkah, exacted high taxes and overburdened caravans with tributes, seized the money assigned for the *Ka`bah*, stole all that was in it of treasures and gifts and stinted in measuring and weighing. They led people away from the faultless religion; the religion of Ibrahim and Isma`il, and spread fear and corruption in Makkah and the vicinity over a period of three hundred years. It was one of the worst stages in the history of Makkah.

The tribe of Jurhum did not absorb the painful lesson of the preceding nations like `Ad (the people of Hud) and Thamud (the people of Salih); thus, the friendly relations between them and neighboring tribes declined. Fallen faces of distress greeted Jurhum whenever they came to circumambulate the *Ka`bah*. Even the caravans that used to pass by Makkah during their journeys trod different ways seeking safety and security away

from them. As people raised their voices in supplication imploring the Almighty for salvation, He (Glorified and Exalted be He) responded by taking revenge on those who offended His religion and frightened the people in His House. Almighty Allah inflicted a severe punishment on the people of Jurhum - He caused them to suffer continuous nosebleed, the result of which they would choke on food and taste turbidity and staleness in their drink. To impose upon them further suffering, the Almighty sent ants over which they would stumble. The ants covered their bodies and faces and entered their mouths and nostrils while they remained helpless. In vain, the people of Jurhum strove hard to terminate the armies of ants creeping towards them from every corner. They ran away seeking salvation, but the ants followed them till by the fall of night, they reached an area called Idam. No sooner had they taken rest than the area was swept by a flood, from which they could not escape; they perished as a reward for their oppression.

When the people of Jurhum sensed their demise, their last chief al-Harith III headed for the *Ka`bah* and took two golden deer and some swords and shields that were inside it. He felt that he was being watched, so he threw all what he seized into the Well of Zamzam and covered them with sand. Then, he returned to his people who started to leave Makkah.

Thusly, Makkah was cleansed of the enemies of Allah's Religion and the management of the affairs of the *Ka`bah* was returned to the children of Isma`il through Nizar ibn Ma`d ibn `Adnan. Makkah began to prosper again, the number of pilgrims increased and caravans started to frequent the path of Makkah through their journeys. Since the children of Isma`il were firm

adherents of the religion of their grandfather Ibrahim, they set out to propagate it and teach people the Scriptures (of Ibrahim).

Life in Makkah streamed along, and when death came to Nizar, he bequeathed guardianship to his son Iyad. Only after a short while, there emerged a conflict between Iyad and his brother Mudar over leadership. When they were on the verge of war, Mudar came out victorious.

(8)

Night descended on Makkah enveloping it in darkness; the moon was veiled and the stars disappeared. Iyad and some of his men set off for the *Ka`bah* to circumambulate the House, and, then, travel to Iraq, as Makkah had turned into a tense place for him and his brother Mudar. While Iyad and his men were circumambulating the *Ka`bah* supplicating to Allah and invoking Him, a malicious idea struck his mind. He moved directly towards the Black Stone and instead of kissing or touching it to receive its blessings, he pulled it out and carried it to a remote area.

Never did Iyad suspect, when he went to hide the Black Stone, that he was being watched amidst the darkness. It was a woman from the tribe of Khuza`ah, who had come for circumambulation. She followed Iyad while he was hiding the Black Stone and then returned to inform her people of what she had witnessed. Taking into consideration that the people of Khuza`ah were laying in wait for a suitable opportunity to take up the reins of Makkah, they found it a great opportunity upon which they should seize in order to gain control of Makkah and the *Ka`bah*.

By the morning, people discovered that the Black Stone was missing, and, consequently, Mudar grieved as he knew of his brother's fleeing. Then, the chief of Khuza`ah came to him and said, "O Master of the children of Isma`il, what if I tell you where the Black Stone is?" Before Mudar could reply, the chief of Khuza`ah quickly continued, "I could tell you on the condition that the children of Isma`il relinquish their guardianship of the House to Khuza`ah."

Mudar could do nothing but accede to the chief's demand. He returned the Black Stone to its place, betwixt the happiness of finding it and the sorrow over what his brother had perpetrated, which compelled him to give up the guardianship of the House!

The people of Khuza`ah, tightening their grip on the affairs in Makkah and the *Ka`bah*, commenced a new era that constituted an extension of that of Jurhum. The most glaring offence committed by Khuza`ah was `Amr ibn Luhayy's despicable act. He brought an idol called Hubal and placed it in the *Ka`bah*; then, he ordered his people to circumambulate it and offer him sacrifice. This deed inaugurated a new era of idolatry.

As a traveler and trader, `Amr ibn Luhayy al-Khuza`yy used to circumambulate the *Ka`bah* and take some of its stones before every journey, as a reminder of the House of Allah. During his journeys, he would circumambulate these stones. On one of his travels to the Levant he found out that the people there dedicated themselves to idolatry. They would worship the idols, each of which took a different shape, such as `Ishtar, Ba'l, Hadad, etc. `Amr was content with what he saw in the Levant, unaware that

it constituted a disbelief in Allah and the religion of Ibrahim. He brought with him the idol Hubal and placed it in the Ka`bah to circumambulate it. This happened during the rule of Jurhum and, though people disagreed with him, he insisted on them adhering to the worship of Hubal. People disliked him; however when he was destined to rule Makkah, he forced people into idolatry introducing a practice along the false path.

The Yemeni people, in the meantime, were observing what was going on in Makkah, wishing that they could gain control over the House of Allah. They recognized that it was the source of Arab glory, pride, honor and power. They also knew that it was the destination of many tribes who would frequent it to circumambulate it and offer sacrifices to the gods. At that time, most of the Yemeni people were embracing Judaism; their acquaintance with Judaism dates back to the era of the queen of Sheba.

Through their study of the Torah, the Jewish rabbis knew that a Messenger would be sent in the land of Makkah with a new religion and that this religion would widely circulate. They lived in hope that they could dominate Makkah, destroy the *Ka`bah*, and seize and carry its stones to Yemen. With the stones of the *Ka`bah*, they wished to erect a house in Yemen to which people would go on pilgrimage. Thusly, the campaigns of Tubba' successively arrived in Makkah. The first campaign was led by Tubba' I, who sought - through his army - to destroy the *Ka`bah*, but he was severely defeated. This fatal defeat did not prevent the Yemeni people from following their unscrupulous plan. As soon as Tubba` II had assumed power, he formed a large army and led it in a campaign towards Makkah seeking to

achieve the victory that his ancestors had failed to obtain. He camped in an area known as Nakhl, near to Makkah. He looked at the *Ka`bah* - a spate of thoughts flooding his mind; some drew the image of victory while many others reminded him of the defeat of his forefathers. The image of defeat disturbed his thoughts and extinguished the flame of enthusiasm glowing in his heart, every time he looked at the *Ka`bah.* Intense would send shudders up his spine like arrows piercing his chest.

One night, Thubba` dreamt that his tent, which his men had set up for him, shrunk in size till it almost pinned him to the ground. He saw that a violent blow, which he could not resist, plucked it out leaving him alone, exposed to a scorching sun and burnt by the torrid sands. When he awoke up, he recalled the dreadful dream, but could not explain it. Apprehension and distress almost drew him back to his homeland. Tubba` then ordered his men to block the way to Makkah and turn people away from it. He sent his soldiers to its defiles to attack the people living there. They captured men, enslaved women and stole whatever their hands could reach of camels and sheep.

When the people of Khuza`ah learnt of what Tubba` and his men had done, they were in fear of their lives; they were afraid of what would await them in the hands of the enemy of Allah. However, the children of Isma`il were still firmly loyal to the House of Allah, which their grandfather had built. They were ready to sacrifice everything in order to preserve it.

The people of Khuza`ah took advantage of the enthusiasm of the children of Isma`il and pushed them to the battlefront. So, the men of Quraysh. Kinanah, Asad and Mudar, joined by Banu Lu'ayy, Taym and Qays took counsel together. The decision was

to attack the enemy outside Makkah to avoid desecrating the Inviolable House by bloodshed and scattered body parts.

While the people of Khuza`ah avoided the battle, the children of Isma`il were heading for the front line. Fihr ibn Malik - who was surrounded by his grandsons (Lu'ayy, Taym and Asad) - encouraged the soldiers, urged them to fight and strengthened their faith in defending the House. The two armies met in a fierce and awesome battle. Cries spread, the swords clanged and dead bodies and limbs were scattered. The children of Isma`il achieved victory over the Yemeni army and captured Tubba` who was taken to the *Ka`bah*. He was stumbling over his defeat. He was grief-stricken when he saw people circumambulate the House which he had come to demolish. The night's impression of an impending dawn was misleading - the night would linger for long.

When Fihr reviewed his men after the battle, he was aghast to find his grandson missing - Qays who was martyred in defence of the House of Allah. Tubba` remained in his prison in Makkah until his men managed to ransom him for money. He headed for his country bearing the stain of his fiasco. His heart was burdened with a gaping wound and he died before he could reach his country.

It is impossible for anyone to veil the light of the sun!

(9)

The Yemeni king Tubba` met his high courtiers to discuss the affairs of the Himyarite Kingdom and plan for a happier future. Unlike any other country in the Arabian Peninsula, Allah has endowed Yemen with plentiful rain, fertile soil and copious amount of crops.

While Tubba` was holding his counsel, some men who had been said to be from Hudhayl, entered the court. When they sat before the king, one of them began, "My Lord, we have come only for the sake of your benefit. We wonder at a people who, though neighboring you, deny the Call of Musa and boast of the house of their gods. These gods are idols to which they offer sacrifice claiming that they may bring them near in proximity to a God other than Yahweh."

Tubba` was stirred by the words and asked, "What is the matter with those people and the house of their gods?"

The men replied, "It is a house which one of their grandfathers built a long time ago and which they circumambulate. They invite other tribes, Arabs and non-Arabs, to go on pilgrimage to it." Tubba` continued, "According to my knowledge, it is a faltering house that is as old as the hills; it was

built in a land that is not under cultivation, where there is no plant or water. Even these gods scattered around it were covered in dust and they cannot remove it!"

One of the men eagerly said, "That is not of significance Lord. The house is replete with treasures of gold, pearls, corundum, rarities and money!" Another one added, "If my Lord is destined to demolish the house and drive people away from it, he would enhance the Call of Musa and promote the standing of Yemen among nations."

The King, convinced by the men's words, now desired to demolish the *Ka`bah*, seize the treasures and, at the same time, avenge the failure of his ancestors in their pursuit to destroy the *Ka`bah*. He took counsel with his courtiers who, almost unanimously, agreed to attack the *Ka`bah*.

He gathered a large army, led it himself and equipped it with weapons and ammunition. They were driven by a spirit of revenge, grudge and avarice towards the *Ka`bah*. While on their way, maneuvering through valleys and over hills and mounds, a raging storm erupted. At first, they thought it was a rainstorm, but, in fact, it was a dry gale with dark storm clouds that turned the day into a pitch-dark night.

Blinded by the darkness, they blundered around in paralyzed fear, as the winds wrenched their tents.

When the storm subsided, the king summoned some Jewish rabbis and addressed them, "This storm puzzles me greatly, as we have come only for the benefit of Musa's Call?!" One of the rabbis advised him, "My Lord, by Yahweh, we believe this wind is a heavenly fury sent by Allah. Thus, it would be better for us

to turn back to Yemen and spare ourselves the hardship of the journey. It would also be better to leave the *Ka`bah* for its people."

However, the words of the rabbi did not appeal to the king - he remained adamant in his desire to capture the treasures of the *Ka`bah*. He sneered at the rabbis and dismissed them, then, proceeded on his way to Makkah.

When the King was close to Makkah, his body began to debilitate. Attributing it to the toil of the journey, he took rest in his tent. As he slept, he dreamt that he was atop a high mountain surrounded by bottomless canyons, the sight of which frightened him. Then, he felt an invisible hand was pushing him downwards. He was about to fall to the bottom, when he bumped against a large stone, causing pain and bleeding to his head. He woke up crying and was horrified by the real pain that he felt in his head. When he touched his head, a putrid pus stuck to his hand. He discovered that some of his men were suffering the same. The fetid pus caused them great discomfort, to the extent that some men preferred death to a life full of pain, especially how that it had become difficult for them to return to their homes.

Then the king, recalling the awful dream, realized that he was on the verge of collapse. So, he gathered the rabbis and consulted them about this condition. They said, "O Lord, Makkah embraces the Inviolable House of Allah, which had been built by Ibrahim, the forefather of the prophets; the forefather of Musa and Ya`qub. It was meant to be a safe sanctuary to which people resort and are fed when hungry. It is encompassed by angels and blessed by Ibrahim. In addition, a

new prophet will come out of its land; he will call people to the right path and spread his religion. His word will be supreme. The Torah tells of all this and, thus, we believe it would be better for us to go back to Yemen. We have had enough of hardships."

The King exclaimed, "We should not leave all the property, gold and jewelry to the idolaters!!"

The rabbis responded, "By the God of Musa, the people of Hudhayl had lied to you, Lord, when they alleged that the *Ka`bah* contains treasures and rarities."

The men of Hudhayl were accompanying the King of Yemen in his journey. They bore a grudge towards the people of Makkah because of their high standing among the Arabs. This encouraged them to accompany the king and feign victory, and guide him to the way.

Then, Tubba` summoned them; they were disturbed to see him in such a state, as he was unable to move. When the rabbis had firmly questioned them, they confessed that they had not been telling the truth. They admitted that they were driven by venom towards the people of Makkah due to the honor they attained by means of the House of Allah. Consequently, Tubba` ordered that their hands and legs be hacked and then that they be beheaded.

Reposing in his tent, Tubba` reflected on past incidents and the dream he had not long ago. Then, he gazed at the horizon, invoking the Lord of Musa to grant him guidance and to resolve the sensation he felt when he turned towards Makkah; he felt as if a light were emanating from the House of the Almighty. So,

he left his soldiers behind and, along with some of his men, went to the *Ka`bah* and circumambulated it. He felt a certain happiness that he had not experienced before. The tears that flowed down his cheeks cleaned his heart. Upon completion, light penetrated his heart and his pains gradually lessened. Placing his hand upon his head, he discovered that it was cured of the pus. Hence, he thanked his Lord; the Lord of the *Ka`bah*, Musa, Ibrahim and Isma`il. Then, he shouted at his men, "Offer sacrifices in recognition of the Lord of the *Ka`bah*."

Tubba` spent some days near the *Ka`bah*, deriving pleasure from watching sunlight flood the sacred valley, adding to its illumination and splendor, while people were circumambulating, supplicating and praising Allah.

He yearned to extend his stay in this sacred land, but he was obliged to go home where he had left his family and kingdom. Before he departed, he brought some gifts for the *Ka`bah*, made a door in it, and dressed it in a beautiful covering that had been made in Yemen. He went on to say, "That is the Grace of Allah which he brings to whomsoever he wants".

(10)

The tribe of Khuza`ah played no role in resisting the attacks of the Yemeni people of Tubba` on Makkah. Rather, it was His Decree that His House be preserved against bloodshed or desecration. The children of Isma`il played a distinguished role in gathering the people of Makkah together to defend the House of Allah, awarding some of their men were martyrdom.

However, the lessons of this event were not headed by the people of Khuza`ah after the fate that befell the people of Tubba`. Instead, their behavior towards the *Ka`bah* and the people of Makkah transgressed even further as they spread the idols around the *Ka`bah*. They followed the steps of their leader who had placed the idol, Hubal, in the *Ka`bah*. The number of idols in Makkah and around increased and each idol was assigned to one or more tribe!

Never satisfied with their wickedness and injustice towards the *Ka`bah* and the religion of Ibrahim, the people of Khuza`ah even attempted to alter the words of *Talbiyah* that have been uttered since the era of Ibrahim (peace be upon him). Adding words that disclaim monotheism and driving people away from the right path. A heretic creation of theirs was circumambulating the *Ka`bah* in the nude. They justified this obscenity by alleging that they may have committed sins while wearing them.

Makkah's wealth was misspent - they were distributed among the masters of Khuza`ah who used to spend them in pursuit of pleasure!

During this time, Makkah turned into a den of corruption where people indulged in false beliefs and, consequently, priest and augurs took advantage of the situation; they used to earn money through misguiding the people who consulted them regarding the affairs of their life such as marriage and travel. Moreover, the superstitions spread so widely and turned to be firm beliefs to which people adhered tenaciously. Subsequently, Isaf and Na'ilah, the symbols of sin, became two gods to which they would offer sacrifices. These were their most revered gods!

The pure teachings of Ibrahim's religion were almost submerged in a surging sea of perversity, influencing some of the children of Isma`il who went astray and diverged from the religion of their grandfather. Many of them were scattered outside Makkah while only a little party preferred to adhere to the religion of their grandfather and preach it to others, such as Ka`b ibn Lu'ayy. He was the most careful among people to protect his tribe from idolatry. He knew through his relation with the Jews of Yathrib and the Christians of al-Hirah, that Musa and Jesus bore the glad tiding of a new messenger who would turn people back to monotheism. As was foretold in the Torah[1], he kept faithful to the religion of Ibrahim. His son Murrah and his grandson Kilab ibn Murrah followed the steps of Lu'ayy. However, their call was overwhelmed by the tempest of aberration and disbelief launched by the people of Khuza`ah, and people split up into various sects and factions.

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1. Deuteronomy: 18 (10-18)

As the people of Khuza`ah were preventing any attempt to enlighten the people on truth, they conspired against Kilab ibn Murrah and banished him, along with his wife Fatimah bint Sa`d and his two children Zahrah and Zayd, from Makkah. He was deeply distressed when he was forced to leave his tribe and spend the rest of his life away from Makkah, grazing camels and sheep. His grief led him to an early death, leaving behind a mournful wife and two children.

Meanwhile, a man from the tribe of Quda`ah, Rabi`ah ibn Haram of Banu `Udhrah, came to Makkah. He was destined to marry Fatimah bint Sa`d and take her and her little child, Zayd, to his homeland - the land of `Udhrah in the vicinity of the Levant. In the land of `Udhrah, Zayd ibn Kilab was raised by his mother, stepbrothers and stepsisters, unaware of his real ancestry. When he reached maturity and learnt that he descended from the children of Isma`il and not Quda`ah, by Allah's infinite wisdom, he decided to return to Makkah. When Zayd, who was later called Qusayy, went to Makkah as a pilgrim, ecstasy erased all traces of endured exile. He acquainted himself with the history of his grandfather Isma`il and knew that it was his tribe who built the *Ka`bah* and that his grandmother, Hajar, was the first inhabitant of the land of Makkah. Thus, he believed himself to be the most entitled to control the homeland of his own people. Aggrieved to find the tribe of Khuza`ah run the House of Allah though they did not belong to the lineage of Ibrahim and Isma`il, he worked towards restoring his right.

When Qusayy had finished circumambulation, he sat by the *Ka`bah* and began to recollect the past events of his life, some of which he experienced himself and others which were narrated to

him about his forefathers. Contemplating the affairs of the *Ka`bah*, he supplicated to Allah to grant him success to regain his right.

Qusayy was famous for his sound-mindedness, and insight; these features kept his grief at bay, preventing him from committing injustice. His heart was distorted from the spirit of revenge and ignorance. Therefore, many people gave their hearts to him, liked his company, and supported him. It so happened that Qusayy paid a visit to Hulayl, the master of Khuza`ah, unaware that it was an excellent opportunity for closer relations.

They conversed, and Hulayl admired Qusayy's wisdom and composure and married his daughter, Hayiyy, to him. Such a marriage commenced a family relationship between the tribe of Khuza`ah and the children of Isma`il.

Qusayy observed the unstable conditions in Makkah and started to return the rights to its own people. Thus, he managed to win the favor of his father-in-law and hold the keys of the *Ka`bah*. Despite the consent of some men of Khuza`ah, some others harbored a grudge against him, which surfaced when Hulayl submitted the keys to Qusayy just before his death. As Qusayy now controlled the *Ka`bah*, the people of Khuza`ah overtly resented him and tried to regain the keys of the *Ka`bah*. Aware of the evil they harbored, he sought the help of his relatives in Quda`ah. His stepbrother, Rizrah ibn Rabi`ah came to his assistance. They were joined by Banu Quraysh and Banu Kinanah forming a force led by Qusayy. On the other hand, the people of Khuza`ah, joined by Banu Bakr, unanimously agreed to engage in war. The two discordant groups moved away from the *Ka`bah* in order not to desecrate or violate it; they feared that

the punishment that had once afflicted the tribe of Jurhum might befall them.

However, they were intent on fighting each other. As soon as the pilgrims had descended the mountain of `Arafat, the armies started fight in Mina. Each party fought desperately. There were heavy casualties, and numerous limbs and blood flooded the battlefield in Mina but no party gained full victory.

The tribes in Makkah foresaw an imminent calamity about to afflict the House of Allah. Thus, they agreed to stop the war and abide by the judgement of Ya`mur ibn `Awf, who was known for his sound mind and fair judgment. Ya`mur assessed the case in the *Ka`bah* and judged that the guardianship of Makkah and the House of Allah should go to Qusayy and his sons, on the condition that the tribe of Khuza`ah keep their houses and properties without being driven out.

Hence, the affairs were settled in Makkah with Qusayy ibn Kilab obtaining complete control over the affairs of providing food and water to the pilgrims and guarding the *Ka`bah*. He was the first leader of Banu Kinanah and his people obeyed him.

Thus, Makkah commenced a new era in which Qusayy endeavored to achieve revival and bring about the happiness of both the inhabitants of Makkah and the guests. Thanks to the efforts of Qusayy, Makkah turned into a large city with high, spacious houses, among which the houses of the children of Isma`il were the nearest to the *Ka`bah*, followed by the houses of other tribes.

Qusayy cared for the affairs of the pilgrims and worked to comfort them. He dug some wells outside Makkah to provide

water for both the pilgrims and the wayfarers. Among the most important wells were the Well of al-`Ajul and the Well of ibn al-Mut`am. He also assigned rations for the pilgrims in Mina. He demolished the *Ka`bah* and rebuilt it. He supervised and handled the construction himself just as his ancestors, Ibrahim and Isma`il had done. He even repeated their supplication, ﴿*Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower*﴾.

Moreover, Qusayy, the first to construct it after Ibrahim and Isma`il, roofed the *Ka`bah* with the branches of palms. He worked for strengthening ties between Makkah and its neighbors, broadening the scope of trade in Makkah and increasing the resources. Thus, Makkah enjoyed a boom at that time.

Through his experience, especially his struggle with the tribe of Khuza`ah, Qusayy learned to follow a new approach in running the affairs entrusted to him. He used to counsel some wise men among the masters of Makkah and, for that cause, he established Dar an-Nadwah (A consultation forum). There, the master would gather, discuss the affairs of their life and solve problems. The forum continued for many years and, during these years, succeeded in solving many problems. It was a lighthouse for consultation and sound judgments.

Makkah was now prospering and kept pace with many other cities in different countries such as Iraq, Egypt and the Levant. It acquired greater status by the presence of the House of Allah, yet remained besmirched by widespread idolatry, even among the children of Isma`il. Some people ascribed their children to the gods, such as `Abd al-`Uzza and `Abd al-Lat.

As Qusayy had exerted great efforts to retrieve his ancestral right of guarding the *Ka`bah*, he was also required to labor in order to secure the peace and safety of those who would succeed him. Thus, when he felt his departure from this life, he relinquished the affairs of feeding, drinking, holding forum and taking care of the House, to his son `Abd ad-Dar. He realized that `Abd ad-Dar was more responsible than his brother `Abd Manaf.

The progeny of `Abd ad-Dar and `Abd Manaf differed among themselves; the children of `Abd ad-Dar disputed with the children of `Abd Manaf over the right of guarding the *Ka`bah*. Some other tribes participated in the dispute, each group encouraging either of the quarreling parties. While the tribes of Banu Asad; Banu Zaharh; Banu Tamim and Banu al-Harith joined the children of `Abd Manaf, the tribes of Banu Makhzum; Banu Sahm; Banu Jumah and Banu `Uday, on the other hand, allied with the children of `Abd ad-Dar. Meanwhile, a third group of tribes, including Banu `Amir and the descendants of Fihr took a neutral stand.

A fight was about to flare up between the two parties, but as the Almighty had decided that stability would prevail in His House and among its inhabitants, He guided the quarreling parties to agree on sharing the affairs of guardianship among themselves. They concluded that feeding, drinking and leadership would go to Banu `Abd Manaf, while the share of Banu `Abd ad-Dar would include holding forums and carrying the banner.

As a result, the descendants of Isma`il assumed leadership, which was handed down to their successors. Hisham ibn `Abd

Manaf, who succeeded his father, managed to run the affairs of Makkah; to serve the pilgrims and to dig some wells such as the Well of Sajlah. Also, he used to bring water from outside Makkah for the pilgrims. Moreover, he initiated the customary accord for the winter and summer caravan, to the Levant and Yemen. Allah, the Almighty, says, ﴿*(It is a great Grace and Protection from Allah), for the taming of the Quraysh. (And with all those Allah's Grace and Protections for their taming, We cause) the (Quraysh) caravans to set forth safe in winter (to the south), and in summer (to the north without any fear). So let them worship (Allah) the Lord of this House. (He) Who has fed them against hunger, and has made them safe from fear.*﴾ (Quraysh: 1-4)

One day, Hashim traveled with a caravan to the Levant. During the journey, he passed by Yathrib. There, he married Salma bint `Amr ibn `Adiyy from Banu an-Najjar, one of the noble ladies in her tribe. She gave birth to a baby whose name was Shaybat al-Hamd. Later on, Hashim said farewell to his wife and child (setting out on one of his journeys). He was destined to pass away in Ghazzah (Gaza), while his son, Shaybah remained in the custody of his maternal uncles (Banu an-Najjar). However, Shaybah would yearn for Makkah, the land of his father and ancestors. It was when his paternal uncle al-Muttalib went to visit him that he brought him to Makkah on his camel. Thus, he was called `Abd al-Muttalib. How great was `Abd al-Muttalib's pleasure when he entered the *Ka`bah* and circumambulated it. When his uncle, al-Muttalib died childless (leaving no posterity behind), guardianship of the *Ka`bah* and feeding the pilgrims moved to `Abd al-Muttalib.

(11)

Once, `Abd al-Muttalib entered the Sacred House and circumambulated the *Ka`bah*. It satisfied and pleased him overwhelmingly. When he had finished, he headed for the shrine of Isma`il. Afterwards, he sat in the shade of the *Ka`bah*, as though it was the shade of a luxuriant tree, closed his eyes and began to reminisce.

Suddenly, an invisible caller commanded him, "O `Abd al-Muttalib! Dig Tibah ... Tibah ... Tibah."

`Abd al-Muttalib wondered, "What is Tibah?"

But he did not receive any answer as the voice disappeared. He was somewhat perplexed because he did not know the significance of Tibah. However, he had a mysterious feeling that something good would happen.

`Abd al-Muttalib went home seeking tranquility and as soon as he entered, his wife Samra' bint Jundub received him - as usual - with affectionate words that alleviated his anxiety. He told Samra', the mother of his son, about the invisible caller.

His words made her happy and she advised him, "Wait for tomorrow and this invisible caller may come to you again and reveal the secret."

The next day, he went to the same place and slept near the shrine of Isma`il. The voice appeared saying, "Dig Barrah ... Barrah ... Barrah."

`Abd al-Muttalib asked, "What is Barrah?"

Again, the voice disappeared and his confusion intensified. He went home where his wife eagerly received him and said, "Wait for tomorrow as this invisible caller may come to you again and reveal the secret."

When he had gone to the same place the next day, the invisible caller commanded him, "O `Abd al-Muttalib! Dig al-Madnunah ... al-Madnunah ... al-Madnunah."

He shouted, "What is al-Madnunah?"

As usual, the voice disappeared. Deeply perplexed, he considered seeking the help of a priest, but his wife confidently said, "O Abu al-Harith, take it easy! Do not aggravate your anxiety and fear; it is common here among people to have such visions."

She kept silent for a while to perceive the impact of her words on her husband. Then, she went on, "What prevents you from seeking the love of gods?! Go and offer a sacrifice in order to gain the satisfaction of the gods, the poor and the hungry (persons)."

Her words brought him relief; he went to the *Ka`bah* and offered camels to the gods. The poor (people), beasts and birds ate their fill and were greatly pleased.

The next day, `Abd al-Muttalib went to the shrine of Isma`il and the invisible caller commanded him, "O `Abd al-Muttalib! Dig Zamzam ... Zamzam ... Zamzam."

He asked, "What is Zamzam?"

Surprisingly, the invisible caller answered, "It never depletes nor does its water lessen ... It is to provide water for pilgrims."

`Abd al-Muttalib questioned again, "Where is it?"

"It is between excretions and blood ... at the peck of the crow with whitish wings ... at the ants' nest," the invisible caller answered.

`Abd al-Muttalib, then, woke up. He was ecstatic, now that he learnt the significance of the caller's words.

Being the master of Makkah, he was responsible for providing water to the pilgrims. It was a grueling task, as rains were rare in Makkah. Its people survived on the water of the exhaustible wells, as the land was deprived of rivers. `Abd al-Muttalib knew that many tribes had the honor of digging wells - Banu Taym dug the Well of Murrah; Banu `Abd Shams dug the Well of at-Tuwa and Sajlah; Umayyah dug the Well of al-Hafr; Banu `Abd ad-Dar dug the Well of Umm Ahrad, etc. Thus, he felt the great honor of digging again the Well of Zamzam which Almighty Allah caused to gush forth at the feet of his forefather Isma`il a long time ago.

`Abd al-Muttalib told his wife of the matter and he spent his night thinking.

In the morning, `Abd al-Muttalib, accompanied by his son al-Harith, headed for the *Ka`bah* carrying his axe and bowl. When they had arrived and looked at the gods (idols) around the *Ka`bah*, they found a crow pecking the land between Isaf and Na'ilah (idols). `Abd al-Muttalib realized that it was the place which the invisible caller described, they began digging. Pearls

of sweat mingled with the dust, but the task brought them great pleasure. Before long, `Abd al-Muttalib's axe struck a big stone. His vision about to be realized, he and his son labored to remove the stone. Suddenly, some men appeared, furious and ordered `Abd al-Muttalib to stop digging. They thought that `Abd al-Muttalib intended to insult their gods. Thus, one of them cried, "These are our gods and this is our place in which we offer sacrifice!" Another man questioned, "O master of Makkah! Why do you violate our gods?" And, a third confirmed, "By the Lord of the *Ka`bah*, we will not let you desecrate our gods."

They were great in number and `Abd al-Muttalib felt helpless. However, his faith in the goodness of what he was ordered to do induced him to say, "O my people! Let me complete digging. By the Lord of the *Ka`bah*, it is good for you."

They said, "What is good in it?!"

He answered, "It is the Well of Zamzam. I was ordered to dig it again. So, let me achieve my duty and do not prevent me from doing a good deed. Zamzam will provide water for the pilgrims just as it did at the time of Isma`il. It may turn the peaceful Makkah into a green oasis."

A crowd gathered at the *Ka`bah* to witness the quarrel and to reassure the safety of their gods. An argument ensued, some in support of `Abd al-Muttalib, while others were defiant.

However, `Abd al-Muttalib resolved to go on and as soon as he began digging, his axe struck something. When he withdrew it, he found two golden deer.

Thus, some people shouted, "O `Abd al-Muttalib! Hail to you. By our gods, we support you."

`Abd al-Muttalib and his son al-Harith took out the two golden deer and some shields and swords that had been buried by Mudad al-Jurhumi after his people's defeat. Since then, the well was filled up with soil.

`Abd al-Muttalib and his son went on digging until the water gushed out, reminding people of their forefathers Isma`il and Hajar. They all thanked their gods and expressed their gratitude to `Abd al-Muttalib. However, people contested his right concerning the discovery of the items inside the well. Thus, they judged by the gods. They asked the man responsible for the arrows to cast lots. He shuffled the arrows and, as a result, the two golden deer were for the *Ka`bah* and the sword and the shields were for `Abd al-Muttalib who dedicated them to the *Ka`bah*. It was enough for him to have the honor of digging the Well of Zamzam to provide the pilgrims with water.

(12)

Life went on - peace and safety cloaked Makkah. An increasing number of pilgrims who sought the blessing of the idols made their way to the *Ka`bah.* The caravans went to Yemen, Iraq, Egypt and the Levant and gained copious profits.

`Abd al-Muttalib, the master of Makkah, was the happiest. Yet, even in his ecstasy, he remained mindful of his vow - that if the gods blessed him with ten sons who would attain manhood, he would sacrifice one of them at the *Ka`bah.* He married many wives to attain his desire. When his sons all reached maturity, `Abd al-Muttalib decided to fulfill his oath.

One day, in 570 A.C., people gathered around the *Ka`bah* to witness an unprecedented matter; `Abd al-Muttalib would choose one of his sons to be slaughtered. His sons and wives followed him. Enveloped in sadness, they hoped that `Abd al-Muttalib would abandon his senseless vow. `Abd al-Muttalib approached Hubal (an idol) and addressed the man responsible for the arrows, "Once, I made a vow that if gods granted me ten sons, I would sacrifice one of them. So, cast lots for my sons."

Some people tried to dissuade him from carrying out his vow, but he - in spite of his great sorrow - was adamant, seeking the gods' satisfaction. People whispered, "Who will be the sacrifice?"

The intensity increased and the man responsible for the arrows began to cast lots.

"This is the arrow of `Abd Manat (Abu Talib) ... Gods did not accept him."

"This is the arrow of az-Zubayr ... Gods did not accept him."

"This is the arrow of `Abd al-`Uzza (Abu Lahab) ... Gods did not accept him."

People remained silent and were spellbound. The man responsible for the arrows continued, "This is the arrow of `Abdullah ... Gods did accept him to be the sacrifice!"

Silence and distress prevailed as `Abdullah was the best among the young men of Makkah. `Abd al-Muttalib was dumbfounded, for `Abdullah was his dearest son. However, he had to fulfill the gods' will. He held the knife and took `Abdullah by the hand to sacrifice him at Isaf (an idol). The scene resembled that of the Prophet Ibrahim and his son Isma`il.

People approached `Abd al-Muttalib trying to dissuade him from slaughtering his son.

A man asked, "O `Abd al-Muttalib! How dare you slaughter `Abdullah?"

Another requested, "O master of Makkah! Be kind towards the best young man among his people."

The mother of `Abdullah, Fatimah grief-stricken stammered, "O master of Makkah, he is your son! He is a comfort to our eyes."

Also, Samra' - the mother of al-Harith - begged her husband, "O master of Makkah! Remember your late son al-Harith who

died in his youth. Remember your deep sorrow at that time. Thus, keep `Abdullah alive."

The old man kept silent for a while. Perhaps he was thinking of his son al-Harith who helped him dig the Well of Zamzam. Samra' went on, "O master of Makkah, all people condemn what you intend to do." She burst into tears to the extent that people thought that he would answer her appeal. However, `Abd al-Muttalib looked at the crowd and said, "It is the will of the gods; I can do nothing but fulfill it."

Dazed, he took `Abdullah by the hand to sacrifice him at Isaf. Suddenly, a distant voice bellowed, "O master of Makkah and protector of the *Ka`bah*! By doing so, you pave the way for others to do the same. Do you accept that fathers slaughter their sons at the idols?"

`Abd al-Muttalib stopped as he recognized the voice; it was that of al-Mughirah al-Makhzumi, `Abdullah's uncle. Al-Mughirah continued, "Be kind towards your son. We are not more merciful towards him than you." `Abd al-Muttalib said, "It is the gods' will. I have to fulfill my vow. Ibrahim answered his God's Call and he was about to slaughter his son."

Al-Mughirah said, "But the Lord of the *Ka`bah* ransomed him with a great sacrifice, thus, we should ransom `Abdullah. Perhaps the gods will accept our sacrifice."

His words alleviated `Abd al-Muttalib's anxiety, who now felt that there was a way out. He said, "If his ransom be all my camels and sheep, I will pay."

People, detecting a glimmer of hope, said, "All the camels and sheep of Makkah are a ransom for `Abdullah".

Al-Mughirah said, "O father of al-Harith, would you delay this matter until we go to the diviner of Khaybar to seek her advice?"

`Abd al-Muttalib said, "If the gods accept the ransom, I will offer them whatever they demand. However, if they persist in the slaughter of `Abdullah, by the Lord of the *Ka`bah* I would not renounce allegiance to them."

Many days later, people gathered around the *Ka`bah* as `Abd al-Muttalib and his companions returned from Khaybar. Incense spread everywhere and hymns could be heard. The crowd and `Abd al-Muttalib supplicated to the gods.

When `Abd al-Muttalib had finished circumambulation around the *Ka`bah*, he headed for the man responsible for the arrows and said, "O holder of the arrows! Offer the young man and ten camels as a sacrifice, and then cast the lots for him and for them."

The man cast the lots and said, "The gods accepted `Abdullah as a sacrifice and refused the ten camels."

Despair resonated in the area. `Abd al-Muttalib said again, "O man! Offer `Abdullah and twenty camels as a sacrifice, and then cast the lots for him and them."

Unfortunately, the gods refused the twenty, the thirty, the forty and the ninety camels. People felt pity for `Abd al-Muttalib, his wife and son.

Then, `Abd al-Muttalib said to the man, "Cast the lots for him and for one hundred camels. By the Lord of the *Ka`bah*, I will not refrain from offering them for the sake of `Abdullah."

People held their breath, hoped for the best, and kept supplicating to Allah. Suddenly, the man responsible for the arrows shouted, "The gods accepted the camels. They ransomed `Abdullah with one hundred."

People shed tears of joy. They were delighted at `Abdullah's safety, especially those who wished to marry him such as Fatimah bint Murrah and Raqiqah bint Nawfal.

Then, `Abd al-Muttalib slaughtered the camels and gave a banquet for the people of Makkah and their neighbors. The poor, beasts and birds ate their fill. Thus, Almighty Allah saved `Abdullah for a reason that none could perceive but Him.

(13)

The people of Makkah were euphoric, celebrating `Abdullah's ransoming. Soon after, `Abd al-Muttalib went to Wahb from the tribe of Banu Zahrah to ask his daughter Aminah's hand in marriage to `Abdullah. Aminah was one of the many girls who wished to marry `Abdullah for his noble manners and beauty. She was beautiful, good-looking, kindhearted, innocent and sweet-voiced. They knew each other well, since childhood when they used to play among the hills of Makkah. They were also relatives as their fathers descended from Zahrah and Qusayy, the sons of Kilab.

Then, the newly married couple went home dreaming of endless happiness, eternal love, a good future, a blessed life and great children.

`Abdullah chose to work in the field of trade like many of his peers. He joined a caravan heading for the Levant and his beloved wife bade him farewell wishing him good luck and a safe return.

When the caravan returned, `Abdullah was not among them. `Abd al-Muttalib, his sons and Aminah knew that he fell ill during the journey and that he went to his uncles from the tribe

of an-Najjar in Yathrib seeking rest and recovery. Aminah waited for her beloved husband for a long time, but he did not come back. He passed away in Yathrib and left behind a tortured father, a sorrowful mother and a mournful, pregnant wife.

Aminah, the newlywed, used to think of her late husband and the few happy days that she spent with him. One day, she was tired and went to bed early. As soon as she closed her eyes, she heard an invisible caller in a vision say, "O Aminah! You are conceiving the master of this nation."

Aminah rubbed the sleep from her eyes and began to consider the caller's words, "Is it possible that my son would be the master of his people? Why not! Isn't his grandfather, `Abd al-Muttalib, the master of Quraysh?"

At that time, Aminah did not realize the status her son would achieve, or even that he would be Allah's Prophet.

(14)

"By Christ, I will demolish the *Ka`bah*," Abrahah, the king of Yemen, yelled when he was informed that an Arab urinated in his church (al-Qullays) and stained its walls.

Abrahah removed his crown and furiously declared, "I shall not rest till I take revenge upon the Arabs and demolish their *Ka`bah*."

He held the reins of Yemen[1] following his victory over his rival Aryat. In addition, he was supported by his slave `Attodah who received the wounds inflicted by Aryat instead of his master. However, the sword fell on Abrahah's forehead slitting his eyebrow, eye, nose, and lip and that is why he was dubbed

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1. The Abyssinians entered Yemen through Dahlik Island along the `Asir coast during the era of Dhu Nuwas who persecuted the Christians (the story of the people of the ditch). A Christian slipped away on his horse and reached the Roman Emperor seeking his support against Dhu Nuwas and his soldiers and telling him what they had made. The Roman Emperor replied that his country was far, so he would write to the Abyssinian king who was Christian as well and more adjacent to Yemen. The Christian man went to Negus (the Abyssinian King) with the Emperor's letter to stand up for the Christians. He returned to Yemen with the help of seventy thousand Abyssinian warriors under the leadership of Aryat and among the warriors was Abrahah. Aryat went on his way through the sea until he reached the Yemeni shores. When they met Dhu Nuwas and his Yemeni adherents, Dhu Nuwas realized that he would be defeated so he directed his horse towards the sea, fell into the water and was drowned. Aryat was granted rulership over Yemen. Then, somehow Abrahah persuaded Negus to appoint him as a ruler of Yemen following his victory over his rival Aryat.

Abrahah al-Ashram (Abrahah the Slit). Thus, Abrahah became the king of a vast empire including the Himyarite Kingdom and Yemen.

At that time, Christianity was the dominant religion in Yemen as people embraced it instead of Judaism. Abrahah, the Christian, built a church and called it al-Qullays[1]. He invited people to perform pilgrimage to it instead of the *Ka`bah*. However, he harbored grudge as people continued to perform pilgrimage to an old house instead of his magnificent church.

Thus, he mobilized the army, rode a large elephant and marched with soldiers on camels and horses towards Makkah. They passed through towns, hills and mounds. Some people of Yemen tried to resist Abrahah's army, but they were defeated and their commandant Nufayl ibn Habib was taken captive.

Then, Abrahah reached at-Ta'if and its leaders surrendered. They offered him gifts and gold to persuade him not to demolish their idol (al-Lat). A man of the people of at-Ta'if called Abu Righal volunteered to guide the army to Makkah. However, he passed away on the way to Makkah and was buried in al-Maghmas.

Abrahah went on in his way to Makkah and when he approached it, he surveyed the town and imagined the house of the gods at its center. He felt both horror and hope. At that moment, he recalled his predecessors who came to the *Ka`bah*. Some of them were defeated and some others, who were guided, covered the *Ka`bah* with a dress of silk brocade, circumambulated it and offered sacrifice to the idols.

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1. Abrahah embellished his church with many jewels, marbles and gems that he took from the palace of the queen of Sheba.

The people of Makkah were informed about the arrival of Abrahah and his soldiers and what they did to the tribes that resisted him. The authorities of Makkah, such as `Abd al-Muttalib the chieftain of Makkah; Ya`mur ibn Nufayah, the chieftain of Bakr; Khuwaylid ibn Na'il, the chieftain of Hudhayl and many others met sometimes in the *Ka`bah* and at other times in Dar an-Nadwah in order to deal with the matter. Some of them suggested that they had to defend the House and resist the enemy - that the Arabs should neither remain mere bystanders nor be humiliated. However, some others suggested that they should offer Abrahah money and gifts, as a compensation for the insult that occurred in his church, to prevent him from demolishing the *Ka`bah*.

During their meeting, Hunatah al-Himyari, the messenger of Abrahah, came to `Abd al-Muttalib and said, "O master of Makkah! My master Abrahah sent me to inform you that he did not come to fight you. Rather, he came to demolish the *Ka`bah*. Therefore, if you decide not to fight him, you will keep your wealth and avoid bloodshed."

`Abd al-Muttalib said, "This is exactly what we want; we are against war."

Hunatah said, "Thus, do not prevent him from destroying the *Ka`bah*."

The people of Makkah disputed at great length about what they should do. Finally, `Abd al-Muttalib said, "By Allah, we do not want to fight him. This is Allah's House, which was built by His Intimate Friend, Ibrahim. We are the inhabitants of this House in which people are fed against hunger and are secured against fear. Thus, we want to avoid bloodshed."

Hunatah said to `Abd al-Muttalib, "It would be better to come with me to my master Abrahah in order to assure him your desire for peace."

Consequently, `Abd al-Muttalib and some chieftains of Makkah headed for Abrahah's tent which was put-up near Makkah.

Previously, when Abrahah had approached Makkah, he sent an Abyssinian called al-Aswad ibn Maqsud along with some soldiers to rob the caravans that belonged to Quraysh and other tribes. They stole many camels and sheep including two hundred camels from `Abd al-Muttalib and captured many men and women from Quraysh.

`Abd al-Muttalib and his companions entered the tent of Abrahah who stood up to welcome them, knowing that they came seeking peace.

Abrahah said to `Abd al-Muttalib, "O master of Makkah, I came here not to fight you, but to demolish the *Ka`bah*; the house of your gods. If you do not prevent me from doing so, I will be in no need to fight you."

`Abd al-Muttalib said, "We do not have the power to resist you and we do not want to fight you. Thus, we will not prevent you, as this is Allah's House and He will defend it."

`Abd al-Muttalib kept silent for a while and then went on to say, "Your soldiers have seized many camels and sheep of our people including two hundred camels belonging to me. Thus, order them to return what they have captured."

Abrahah, taken by surprise, said, "Are you asking me for the two hundred camels which I have taken over, disregarding the house that represents the religion of yours and of your forefathers which I have come to destroy?!"

`Abd al-Muttalib confidently replied, "I am the owner of the camels and the House has an owner who will defend it."

While `Abd al-Muttalib and his companions went out, his words echoed in Abrahah's mind, "The House has an owner who will defend it."

Abrahah came close to abandoning his mission. However, his pride and deceitful hopes urged him to proceed. Satan mobilized him and he mobilized his army and all of them headed for the *Ka`bah*.

Many of the people of Makkah fled their houses and took refuge in the mountains and valleys fearing Abrahah and his army. However, `Abd al-Muttalib and some men remained in Makkah. They supplicated to the Lord of the *Ka`bah* to keep His House safe and to defeat their enemy. `Abd Al-Muttalib chanted,

O Lord, I appeal to no one but You

Please, keep safe that sanctuary of You

Surely, the enemy of the House is Your Foe

So, let his malevolence be O for O

Then, Abrahah approached the *Ka`bah* and tried to enter it, but the elephant suddenly stopped as if it were pinned to the ground. He tried many times to goad it to proceed, but he failed. To their surprise, when directed towards Yemen, the north or the south, the elephant galloped as if it were meeting its mate! But when they directed it again towards the *Ka`bah*, it kneeled to the ground.

Suddenly, a black cloud covered the whole place. Abrahah and his army thought that it would pour rain. Unexpectedly, the

sky was plunged into complete darkness as if it were night, and swarms of birds appeared carrying stones of hard-baked clay in their beaks and claws and showered them on the army. The stones patted them from head to toe and whoever was hit would start disintegrating. They were like the hollow trunks of date palms! Some of them tried to flee, but they were unable to move about or turn back; all the paths were blocked. They died of thirst, fear and pain and they found nothing to drink but the blood of the corpses and the torn off limbs. Surely, nothing would relieve their pains and fear but death.

Abrahah and some of his soldiers closely observed what happened to their companions. He was about to die when a stone hit him, but Almighty Allah kept him alive to suffer from pains, to remember what afflicted him and to be a warning to those who dare to damage Allah's House.

(15)

The defeat of Abrahah and his army greatly delighted the people of Makkah who returned to their beloved country cheerfully. They were honored with prestige and acquired high status among other tribes, who came to circumambulate the *Ka`bah* and supplicate, praise and offer sacrifices to the gods.

`Abd al-Muttalib was extremely happy as Almighty Allah kept His House safe and returned to him what Abrahah and his army had previously captured. Peace and weal circulated in Makkah and the numbers of the pilgrims increased.

A gentle morning breeze greeted Makkah when `Abd al-Muttalib headed for the *Ka`bah* in order to prepare the House for the pilgrims. As he entered the House, he circumambulated the *Ka`bah* and then sat beside the shrine of Isma`il to watch the circumambulators, as usual. He closed his eyes and began to recall the lovely memories and incidents that he, along with the people of Makkah, had passed through.

`Abd al-Muttalib recollected the dream that he had previously had. He dreamt as if he were in a magnificent garden with numerous, large trees. Among these trees, there was a luxuriant one whose leaves and branches reached the sky. Some people gathered around this great tree to sit in its shadow and to reap its fruit. But some others climbed its branches and spoiled

its fruit. They tried to pull out its branches and leaves and to pull up its roots. However, they failed to fulfill their evil intentions.

`Abd al-Muttalib never forgot this dream, which he had many times during his sleep. Also, he never forgot the rabbi that met him in Yemen. As soon as he saw `Abd al-Muttalib, he said, "O master of Makkah! There is domination in one of your hands and Prophethood in the other."

Also, `Abd al-Muttalib recalled the image of his son `Abdullah whom he ransomed with a hundred camels. Afterwards, `Abdullah joined a caravan and died in Yathrib leaving behind a pregnant wife.

While `Abd al-Muttalib was reflecting on his past, Barakah, the maid of his daughter-in-law Aminah, displaying extreme joy, came to him saying. "O my master! My mistress begot a baby with a bright face."

With tears of joy streaming down his cheeks, `Abd al-Muttalib headed for the house of Aminah. She gave him the baby and said, "I named him Muhammad; the invisible caller ordered me to do so."

`Abd al-Muttalib exclaimed, "What a beautiful name! What did the invisible caller tell you?"

Aminah answered him while various images were conjuring up in her mind, "He told me that he would be the master of this nation."

These words reminded him of the words of the rabbi whom he met in Yemen. `Abd al-Muttalib took his grandson and went to the House of Allah. He circumambulated the *Ka`bah* while supplicating and praising Allah, the Almighty for His Favor.

Muhammad, the baby, spent some years with his wet nurse Halimah as-Sa`diyyah at Banu Sa`d. Then, he spent some years under the wing of his mother and grandfather. When he was six years old, his mother passed away and was buried in al-Abwa'. Then, when he was eight, his grandfather `Abd al-Muttalib died joining the line of his deceased forefathers, Ibrahim, Isma`il and Qusayy.

(16)

Like all the Arab tribes then, the society of Makkah suffered from disintegration. Many conflicts erupted among the tribes and within the tribes. Such conflicts led to the disunity of the society. Other factors that contributed to its deterioration were blood revenge, female infanticide and waging wars for trivial reasons. Makkah's society and its social affairs weakened due to these factors. The conflicts were at their most severe a few years after the death of `Abd al-Muttalib, as was evident in the war of Al-Fujjar[1], which took place during the Sacred Months.[2]

The reason behind this war was that al-Burad ibn Qays al-Kanani of Quraysh offered to lead the trade caravan of An-Nu`man ibn al-Mundhir under the protection of his tribe. An-Nu`man received a similar offer from `Urwah ar-Rijal of the tribe of Hawzin, whose offer he accepted. This, of course, stirred envy in the latter's heart toward `Urwah and so he killed him. Then, some people from Hawazin gathered and decided to take revenge on the one who killed `Urwah. A battle then ensued

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1. Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him) shared in this war as he helped his uncle Abu Talib by handing him arrows.
2. The months of Rajab. Dhu al-Qa`dah, Dhu al-Hijjah and Muharram. It is not lawful for the tribes to fight during these months.

between the two tribes, Quraysh and Hawazin, at the *Ka`bah*, however neither tribe achieved victory. This battle lasted for four years and then eventually ended when the two opponents agreed to reconcile on the condition that Quraysh must pay to Hawazin the *Diyyah* (blood money) of twenty killed men.

Shortly after this war, early one morning, the people of Makkah heard someone yelling from the top of the Mountain of Qubays. Az-Zubayr ibn `Abd al-Muttalib was sitting with some men from Makkah. Astonished to hear such a strange yell coming from the top of the mountain, az-Zubayr rushed there to find a man who proclaimed an unjust occurrence.

The people then gathered around that man to listen to his story. They learnt that this man came from Zubayd in Yemen to trade. Al-`As ibn Wa'il then bought the man's goods but he did not pay. The man then sought the help of some men from `Abd ad-Dar, Makhzum and Jamah but unfortunately all his efforts were in vain, for instead of helping him, they rebuked him and rejected his complaint. Desperate, the man thought that the only way to attain justice was to declare his complaint upon the people of Makkah in this unusual manner near Allah's Sacred House.

Believing in this man, az-Zubayr ibn `Abd al-Muttalib took on the responsibility of bringing justice to him. Quraysh then held a meeting with the tribes of Zahrah and Taym in the house of ibn Had`an to discuss the matter. They decided that it was their duty to unite and help this deceived man to regain his right from the one who had wronged him. They believed that this was their only choice - they were the grandsons of Ibrahim and Isma`il, and could never accept to be wronged or to see someone

being wronged among them; they could never permit any quarrels or conflicts to take place again near Allah's Sacred House. Reaching this conclusion, they formed a treaty that was called Hilf al-Fudul, whereby they all went to al-`As ibn Wa'il, seized from him the man's goods and rightfully returned them to the owner.

(17)

It was late at night in Makkah, darkness pervaded, and only the dim light of the distant stars were visible. Violent winds erupted, thunder began to roar, and before long rain started pouring heavily upon Makkah and even much more heavily upon the surrounding mountains. Soon after, rainwater started running down through the rivulets in between the mountains until it reached the *Ka`bah.* In such a fearful and dismal atmosphere, the people of Makkah could do nothing except flee to their beds and stay there until the next day.

At first light the next morning, people rushed towards the *Ka`bah.* To their great surprise, they found that the water had permeated the *Ka`bah* and had cracked its walls. They were terrified to see the *Ka`bah* that stood firm in front of the enemies and Abrahah to be in such a miserable state. People were perplexed; they did not know what to do. It was a fearful mess. They were unable to practice their rituals, as their idols were almost all covered with water. Furthermore, some of them had already drowned.

Long before this incident, they had considered rebuilding the *Ka`bah* but soon changed their minds for fear of being afflicted by the gods' curse. They believed in the many superstitions and

legends that revolved around the *Ka`bah* and about the gods, thus they never had the courage to touch it.

However, people disputed over the matter. Some people, led by al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, were enthusiastic about the idea of rebuilding the *Ka`bah*, whereas some others, led by abu Wahb ibn `Amr, were totally against this idea. Each of the two parties declared its opinion in the hope that they might come to some agreement. As for those who were in favor of rebuilding the *Ka`bah*, they believed that it would be doing something good for the gods, the people of Makkah and for the pilgrims; and they also believed that there was nothing to be afraid of. Those who rejected the idea of rebuilding the *Ka`bah* justified their stance by expressing their fears of the gods' curses that might befall them if they dared to touch the *Ka`bah*, first built by Ibrahim and Isma`il. Added to their fear was the terrifying serpent present at the *Ka`bah*, as if it had been there to guard it. It had the head of a goat, a white belly and a black back. It emerged everyday to see if anyone had dared to come near the walls of the *Ka`bah*. If anybody dared to do so, it would raise its head, open its mouth and get ready to pounce upon him. Thus, who dares to touch the walls of the *Ka`bah*?

The people of Makkah were torn between fear and hope and lived in great confusion not knowing what to do.

Then one day, a huge eagle fell upon this terrifying serpent, grasped it between its claws after a fierce fight and flew up again high in the sky.

A few days later, someone informed the people of Makkah that a Roman ship carrying building materials like marble, iron and wood had been driven by the winds to the shores of Jiddah.

The ship was destroyed and nothing was left of it except the wood it had been carrying. On hearing this, al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah and some of his men headed towards this ship, bought the wood on it and hurriedly brought it back to Makkah. Furthermore, an Egyptian Christian man living in Makkah had experience in the fields of carpentry and building. It seems as though the way was paved to take the decision of rebuilding the *Ka`bah*; the serpent was no longer there, the wood was available and the skillful workman was on hand. The only thing left to do was to choose the one who would have enough courage to start pulling down the walls of the *Ka`bah*.

Suddenly, al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah announced, in great determination, that he would perform this burdensome task. He then climbed the Yemenite Wall and prayed to the gods. Al-Walid said, "If something bad happens to me, then I will be your sacrifice and if nothing happens then this will be of a great benefit for the gods and us." Then, he struck his axe with force and a part of the wall fell down

People were engulfed in fear of the possible consequences of al-Walid's action. They hoped that the gods might accept the idea. The unfolding event deprived them of sleep.

In the morning, they all hastened towards the *Ka`bah* where they found al-Walid standing in its courtyard looking happy and cheerful. They felt relieved and confident that they could go ahead with their plan. They congratulated each other and al-Walid said, "By the Lord of the *Ka`bah*. it is the will of the gods to pull down the *Ka`bah* and to rebuild it."

They pondered over how to divide the labor among all the tribes. They resorted to Hubal, the oldest among their gods and

then they asked the man responsible for the arrows to cast lots. Thus, Banu `Abd Manaf and Banu Zahrah would be responsible for the wall that had the door in it; Banu Makhzum and Quraysh would be responsible for what was in between the Black Corner and the Yemenite Wall; Banu Jamh, Banu `Amir and Banu Lu'ayy would be responsible for the top of the *Ka`bah*; Banu `Abd ad-Dar, Banu Asad and Banu `Adiyy would be responsible for the side of Al-Hijr.

They evacuated the *Ka`bah* of the gods and the gifts, and removed the Black Stone. Then, they started to pull down the *Ka`bah*. They were happy, leaving no space in their hearts for fear and fatigue. However, as one of them was about to strike a rock with his axe, he quickly retreated and almost fell. The man was terrified from the light he saw; an extremely strong light that almost blinded him. He screamed, causing all the men to rush and gather around him. They were all greatly surprised to see strong green rocks that looked like camel humps, laid out in such a way that made it impossible for anybody to separate them from each other.

One of the chieftains said, "O people, leave those rocks for they were the bases above which Ibrahim and Isma`il raised the Sacred House.

The old man's words stirred memories of Ibrahim and Isma`il. Once they completed pulling down the *Ka`bah*, every tribe then had to rebuild the part assigned to it.

The young people then started the building process, with the old standing behind them to support and advise them. They were all content and happy and were even singing while working. They were supplicating to Allah with the same supplication of

Ibrahim, ﴿*Our Lord! Accept this service from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.*﴾

Some of the wise men suggested that it would be better to build the door of the *Ka`bah* a little higher to protect it against the floods. When the building process reached the place of the Black Stone, a great problem arose for it was difficult to determine who would have the honor of placing it in its place.

There was great disagreement between the tribes, as each of them wanted to have this great honor. Work almost came to a standstill and the disagreement almost turned into a conflict. Banu `Abd ad-Dar and Banu `Adiyy led the conflict as they claimed the right of putting the Black Stone in its place since they were responsible for the wall that contains the Stone. They then brought a bowl, filled it with blood and immersed their hands in it and swore that nobody could force them to give up their right and that they would defend their right with might and main, regardless of the consequences.

Quraysh, Makhzum, Zahrah and many other tribes refused to abandon such honor. The conflict flared up and war was about to be waged.

Suddenly, Abu Umayyah ibn al-Mughirah of Banu Makhzum suggested that they should agree to allow the first one who entered from the door of as-Safa judge between them. He was the eldest and so they accepted his idea and stood silently waiting to see who would be the first to enter from that door. While they were staring at the door, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him) entered. On seeing him, some of them shouted saying, "It is the trustworthy man."

Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him) was known in Makkah to be an honorable, truthful, trustworthy and well-advised man. Hence, they were all glad to make him judge between them.

Hearing the case, Muhammad (peace be upon him) asked the people to bring him a sheet and once they did, he spread it and said, "Let a man from each tribe hold a part of this sheet." Accordingly, each tribe chose a representative who were: `Utbah ibn Rabi`ah, Abu Zum`ah ibn al-Aswad, Al-`As ibn Wa'il and Abu Hudhayfah ibn al-Mughirah. Each of them held a part of this sheet and then Muhammad (peace be upon him) placed the Black Stone in the middle of the sheet. They lifted it and then walked together until they reached the place where the Stone used to be. Then, Muhammad (peace be upon him) took it and put it in its place.

Thus, owing to the wisdom of Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him), the conflict was resolved in a peaceful and honorable way. Moreover, the Arab tribes, known for their constant conflicts and disagreements, were united. This made one of them wonder how these honorable, wise, old and rich Arabs had agreed to take the youngest and the poorest among them as a judge and a leader. This man then swore that Muhammad (peace be upon him) would be a man of great rank later on.

Deeply contented, the rebuilding of the *Ka`bah* resumed. They raised the door to prevent further damage from floods. They went on building a bond of wood and another of stone until they reached the eighteen-cubit mark. At this point, they made a roof - raised upon six pillars - with a waterspout to release water. Finally, they replaced all the items back in the *Ka`bah* and covered it with a dress of silk brocade.

(18)

The darkness of night withdrew from Makkah permitting the morning light to take its place. Many came to visit Makkah that day. Some came to circumambulate the *Ka`bah*, others came seeking the gods' content and blessings, and others came only seeking refuge from the heat of the desert. The courtyard of the *Ka`bah* was crowded. Suddenly, all those at the *Ka`bah* heard a voice coming from the top of the Mountain of as-Safa, "*O people of Quraysh, Banu Hashim and Banu Makhzum! Good morning.*"

This mild and beloved voice was the sincere voice of Muhammad ibn `Abdullah. People recognized it easily and so they hurried towards the voice.

People knew that Muhammad ibn `Abdullah was the grandson of `Abd al-Muttalib, the master of Makkah. They knew him to be one of its best men; a man of honesty, truthfulness and wisdom. They never forgot how he resolved the dispute of the Black Stone wisely and peacefully. Thus, hearing his voice calling them, the people of Makkah found themselves responding to him spontaneously.

Once the people gathered, Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "*O people of Quraysh, suppose I told you that there are cavalry units in the valley intending to attack you, would you believe me?*"

They confidently answered with one voice, "Yes Muhammad, for we have not found you speaking anything other than the truth."

Muhammad went on to say, "*O Banu `Abd al-Muttalib, Banu `Abd Manaf, Banu Zahrah, Banu Tamim, Banu Makhzum and Banu Asad! I came to you bearing with me the best of this life and the Afterlife. My Lord has commanded me to invite you to worship Him, so who of you will support me in this to be my brother?*"

They all kept silent and so Muhammad continued, "*Allah has commanded me to warn my people who are close to me. Save yourselves from the Hell-fire. I do not have the power to grant you any of the benefits of this life or any of the shares of the Afterlife unless you bear witness and say that there is no God but Allah, the One and Only.*"

Thus, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him) advised his people truthfully that would grant them a peaceful life in this world and eternal abode (Paradise) in the Afterlife. Confused, some of them stood contemplating the meaning of Muhammad's words, whereas others were envious and were not even ready to think about the matter. Suddenly, a man shouted sarcastically, "May your hands perish all this day. Is it for this purpose you have gathered us?"

The people turned towards the voice to find it was a large man whose heart seemed to be filled with envy towards Muhammad; it was Abu Lahab ibn `Abd al-Muttalib, Muhammad's uncle.

The people were stunned by the words of Abu Lahab, but soon realized that his words only sprang from his hatred towards

his nephew. Abu Lahab then left, followed by some of the leaders of Quraysh like Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, Abu al-Hakam ibn Hisham[1], al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah and some others who were motivated by their hatred towards Muhammad who was calling people to a new religion other than theirs. The idea itself terrified them, they adopted a hostile attitude towards Muhammad.

That day marked the beginning of a new era in the *Ka`bah* and Makkah.

Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (peace be upon him) used to devote himself a month every year for the purpose of worship. In that month, he used to go to the cave of Hira' taking his provisions with him in order to abide there in complete isolation. Alone in that place, Muhammad used to meditate on Allah, the Creator of the heavens and earth.

One day while he (peace be upon him) was in the cave, Jibril came to him with a Divine Command, ﴿*Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). Has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. Has taught man that which he knew not.*﴾ (Al-`Alaq: 1-5)

After the profound yet terrifying experience, Muhammad (peace be upon him) rushed to his wife, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid. He (peace be upon him) related the incident to her. Khadijah comforted him and took him to her cousin Waraqah ibn Nawfal who was a pious man who had embraced Christianity. He had read the Bible and the Old Testament and had known from them that in the near future, a prophet would

1. Abu Jahl.

appear in the region of Al-Hijaz. Hearing what had happened to Muhammad, Waraqah disclosed to them the good news that Muhammad himself was the new prophet mentioned in the two Holy Books. Therefore, the revelations descended upon Muhammad carrying to him his Lord's Commands that mainly called on people to worship Allah the One and renounce the worship of idols.

For three years, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) secretly called his family and friends to embrace Islam. His wife Khadijah, his cousin `Ali ibn Abi Talib, his servant Zayd ibn Harithah, his friends Abu Bakr ibn Quhafah, 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam, `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf, Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas, Talhah ibn `Abdullah, Abu `Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah and many others were among the early Muslims. Then, Jibril came to Muhammad (peace be upon him) with the Divine Command to declare publicly the *Da`wah* and to call people openly to embrace Islam. Almighty Allah says, ﴿*And warn your tribe (O Muhammad) of near kindred.*﴾ (Ash-Shu`ara': 214)

Thus, Muhammad (peace be upon him) immediately went to the *Ka`bah* and mounted the Mountain of as-Safa and called, at the top of his voice, the people to have faith in Allah, the One and to seek His Content by performing the good deeds and refraining from the evil ones.

A conflict then broke out between those who believed in Muhammad (peace be upon him) and those who arrogantly and stubbornly insisted on remaining with their ancestors' religion. Abu Lahab and his wife Umm Jamil, who never ceased harrying the Prophet (peace be upon him), led the party of the disbelievers. Moreover, Umm Jamil forced her two sons, Mu`tab

and `Utbah, to leave their wives, Umm Kulthum and Ruqayyah just because they were Muhammad's daughters. She tried many times to kill him and incited some poets to satirize him. Thus, Allah, the Almighty, revealed, ﴿*Perish the two hands of Abu Lahab (an uncle of the Prophet), and perish he! His wealth and his children (etc.) will not benefit him! He will be burnt in a Fire of blazing flames! And his wife too, who carries wood (thorns of Sadan which she used to put on the way of the Prophet (Peace be upon him), or use to slander him). In her neck is a twisted rope of Masad (palm fibre).*﴾ (Al-Masad: 1-5)

A group once came to Muhammad (peace be upon him) to dispute with him. They tried to convince him to renounce the new religion.

Some of them said, "O Muhammad! Ask your Lord to blow the mountains that made our land narrower. Ask Him to cause the rivers to run in our country as in the Levant, Iraq and Egypt and to bring our dead fathers back to life and among them our honest man Qusayy ibn Kilab in order to ask him about your claims. O Muhammad! Ask your Lord to send an angel to persuade us to believe in your religion. Ask your Lord to grant us gardens and treasures from silver and gold or to cause a piece of the heaven to fall on us."

Furthermore, the people of Banu Malih said, "O Muhammad! We worship the angels believing them to be the daughters of Allah. Thus, We will not believe in your religion until you bring us the angels with Allah altogether, or until you ascend to the heavens while we watch you. and then bring us a copy and four angels testifying that you tell the truth."

All such requests only proved the arrogance and the stubbornness of the polytheists for they knew quite well that Muhammad was only a human being just like them and it was not in his power to fulfill any of their demands. Almighty Allah says, ﴿*Say (O Muhammad): 'I possess no power of benefit or hurt to myself except as Allah wills. If I had the knowledge of the Ghayb (unseen), I should have secured for myself an abundance of wealth, and no evil should have touched me. I am but a warner, and a bringer of glad tidings unto people who believe.'*﴾ (Al-A`raf: 188)

Since that time, Makkah and the *Ka`bah* witnessed the arguments that were held between Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Quraysh. Occasionally, some of these arguments would become more complex; as the people of Quraysh had lived from a very long time in the darkness of polytheism and were wholly obsessed by the false illusion of worshipping the idols.

One day, some men came to dispute with Muhammad (peace be upon him). One of them asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) to tell them about the story of the young men who believed in their Lord in a long time ago. Another one asked him to tell them about the story of the man who wandered around the whole world and another asked him about the secret of the Spirit.

Since Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not speak of his own desire and it was only a Divine Inspiration, he (peace be upon him) asked them to wait until the revelation would be sent down upon him with the answers to their questions. Soon afterwards, Jibril came to him with the verses that answer their questions.[1]

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1. See the verses (9-26), (83-98) of *Surat* Al-Kahf.

The conflict between the Prophet and the enemies of Islam became very aggressive. They persisted in tempting him with money and power in return for renouncing his religion but their efforts were in vain. They sought the help of his uncle Abu Talib so as to convince the Prophet not to insult their idols, but Muhammad even refused this and said to his uncle, "*O my uncle, I swear by Allah that if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand in return for renouncing this religion, I would never ever do it until Allah grants it victory or makes me die for its cause.*"

The polytheists did not give up hope; they made Muhammad's uncle, Abu Talib, another offer. They offered him 'Umarah ibn al-Walid, the strongest among the young men of Makkah, in exchange for his nephew Muhammad so that they might kill him. However, to their disappointment Abu Talib refused this offer.

The polytheists persevered in hurting Muhammad and his Companions and they inflicted all kinds of torment upon the Muslims. Bilal ibn Rabah and `Ammar ibn Yasir and his wife Sumayyah were among the early Muslims who were tortured by the disbelievers. Nevertheless, this severe persecution upon the Muslims did not affect their determination to fight for Allah's Cause and defend His Religion. Moreover, the number of Muslims was also increasing day by day. When Hamzah ibn `Abd al-Muttalib embraced Islam, the Muslims considered this a victory for Islam because he was a brave and courageous man. There was then the immigration of the Muslims to Abyssinia and 'Umar ibn al-Khattab's embracing of Islam, which dawned a new era in the history of this new religion.

But what would the leaders of Quraysh do?

(19)

Furious and outraged, Zuhayr ibn Umayyah stood in front of the *Ka`bah* and yelled with resentment, "O people, I swear by the Lord of the *Ka`bah* that this is a shame on us."

Zuhayr was one of the masters of Makkah. He was known for his wisdom, courage and sound judgement. Many people thus gathered around Zuhayr to see what the matter was. They saw him looking towards the *Ka`bah* as if reading something written upon its walls. Once again, Zuhayr furiously, "I swear by the Lord of the *Ka`bah* that this is pure tyranny."

The people thought that someone had insulted Zuhayr or had wronged him and that he was thus trying to motivate his people to defend him or to help him seek justice.

However, Zuhayr shouted again saying, "O people of Makkah, how come we are eating food and wearing clothes while, Banu `Abd al-Muttalib and `Abd Manaf are dying in their gorges? We have prevented them food and have boycotted them."

After a short silence, assessing the effect of his words upon the people, Zuhayr reiterated once more, "I swear by the Lord of the *Ka`bah* that I shall not stop until this unjust boycott treatise is torn into pieces."

A voice, however, arose from the last rows in challenge, "O Zuhayr, you are lying. I swear by the Lord of the *Ka`bah* that this paper will not be torn."

It was the voice of Abu al-Hakam ibn Hisham, the leader of those who opposed Muhammad's religion. He, together with Abu Lahab and al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah were of those who insisted upon hurting Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his Companions. The people of Quraysh were extremely anxious because the number of the Muslims was increasing everyday, and their endeavors to make Muhammad renounce his religion and his *Da`wah* proved to be futile. Even when they had sent 'Utbah ibn Rubay`ah to Muhammad (peace be upon him) to offer him power and money, he returned telling his people that the Qur'an of Muhammad, as he had heard some of its verses, could never be composed by a human being. He told them that this Qur'an was so eloquent and it only invited people to goodness and justice. `Utbah's acknowledgement of the Divine Revelation convinced people that he had forsaken the religion of his ancestors and so they felt the danger of Muhammad's religion approaching them in a way that made it difficult for them to resist it.

Out of fear, envy and ignorance, the disbelievers decided to hold a meeting to contrive ways of preventing Muhammad from spreading his religion. The meeting concluded with the decision to boycott Banu Hashim and Banu `Abd Manaf and to besiege them in their gorges. They drew up the treatise and hanged it upon the walls of the *Ka`bah*. Therefore, they prohibited any dealings with Muhammad (peace be upon him) or with those who believed with him or even supported him. To ensure this

course of action, they put guards on the outlets of the gorges of Abu Talib to keep an eye on them and to prevent anyone from entering and leaving.

The Muslims endured harsh circumstances during the siege and many starved to death. They were compelled to eat the dry leaves of trees and one dry date would be shared by two. Their children also suffered from the pangs of hunger and their crying could be heard from afar. They survived on the provisions that were secretly sent to them infrequently. Hakim ibn Huzam ibn Khuwaylid, a nephew of Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her), used to sent his aunt food and Hisham ibn `Amr ibn Rubay`ah used to load his camel with food, then free it from its reign to allow it to enter the gorges of Abu Talib.

During the siege that lasted for three years, the Muslims suffered severely from hunger, poverty and spiritual affliction. Nevertheless, their sincere faith in Allah and in their new religion helped them endure all kinds of sufferings, remaining hopeful that one day those who opposed them would reconsider their stance.

While An-Nadr, Abu Jahl, and Abu Sufyan were doing their best to sustain this boycott, many of the people in Makkah felt that this boycott was so unjust. They were not displeased to see their folks suffering this way. They believed that Banu Hashim and Banu `Abd al-Muttalib, whether believing in Muhammad or opposing him, are none other than the people of Makkah who were either their friends, relatives or related to them by marriage. For this reason, many of the people in Makkah felt this boycott was an exaggerated attempt to hurt Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his supporters. They protested many

times against the treatise and requested that it should be expunged. The people found in Zuhayr's discontent a leader in this cause and they supported him. Many people gathered around Zuhayr, and while Abu Jahl was opposing him and declaring him a liar, Zum`ah ibn al-Aswad shouted, "O Abu Jahl! You are the liar, for we had never accepted this treatise when it was written down."

Hisham ibn `Amr then said, "We too declare that we are not content with this treatise."

In defense, Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan, and Abu Lahab claimed that the matter was settled in another place.

A war almost broke out between the two groups, however some men from the two sides decided to go to Abu Talib to ask him to stop his nephew from calling people to Islam. They told him that this would lead to the end of the boycott and reconciliation.

Abu Talib was in the *Ka`bah* watching and listening to the arguments between the people. When Abu Jahl came to him, Abu Talib rose and said, "O people! My nephew told me ..."

However, Abu Sufyan interrupted him, "Perhaps your nephew has come to his senses."

Abu Talib went on saying, "My nephew told me something, and if his words are true - and I believe they are - then it would be best to end your hostility towards him."

Abu Jahl remarked sarcastically, "Or what?"

Abu Talib said, "My nephew told me that the boycott treatise that you have hanged on the walls of the *Ka`bah* was eaten up by the moths."

Abu Sufyan accusingly retorted, "Your nephew is a liar."

Confusion and tension reigned and before the people could decide who to believe, Abu Talib said, "O no, no, I swear by the star of piercing brightness that my nephew is not lying and if you want to make sure, go ahead and see your treatise. If you find the words of my nephew is true, then you must be reasonable, and I swear by Allah that we shall never hand him over to you, even if we all have to die for his sake. And if he is a liar, then we shall hand him to you so you may kill him."

Al-Mut'am ibn `Adiyy and others hurried and snatched the paper and to their great surprise, they found it was all eaten up and nothing was left of it except the words "By the Name of Allah".

Many of the people of Makkah were overjoyed, but Abu Sufyan and Abu Jahl were disappointed and humiliated.

Thus, Almighty Allah granted victory to His Prophet (peace be upon him), abasing the word of the disbelievers and exalting His Word.

(20)

Since the advent of Islam, Makkah and the *Ka`bah* became an arena for conflict between truth and falsehood, between Muhammad (peace be upon him) and those who believed with him, and the polytheists of Quraysh who insisted on sealing their hearts from the truth.

Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his Companions set a great example in patience, perseverance and courage. They endured the various kinds of sufferings and the different types of torments that the oppressive polytheists inflicted upon them. Adding to his anguish was the death of his uncle Abu Talib who used to defend him against the disbelievers, and shortly thereafter the death of his loyal wife Khadijah who stood beside him and encouraged him. The death of those two people left a deep mark upon the Prophet (peace be upon him) and that year was called "The year of sadness".

However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) proceeded on the path of *Da`wah*. He (peace be upon him) went to at-Ta'if with his servant Zayd ibn Harithah. Unfortunately, the chiefs of Thaqif met him aggressively. They also vilified him and incited their children to throw stones at him, causing his feet to bleed. Nevertheless, this did not discourage him (peace be upon him);

on the contrary, the sadness he (peace be upon him) felt motivated him to go on performing the duties of *Da`wah* and even more, he (peace be upon him) supplicated to Allah to guide to the right path those people who had hurt him.

To alleviate his despair, Allah chose for Muhammad (peace be upon him) to experience a very special miracle; the Night Journey (*al-Isra' wa al-Mi`raj*). That night, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was in the house of his cousin Umm Hani' Hind, from his uncle Abu Talib. He (peace be upon him) was taken on a midnight journey from Makkah to Jerusalem, passing on his way the Sinai Mountain where Almighty Allah had spoken to His Prophet Musa (peace be upon him), and by Bayt Lahm where `Isa (peace be upon him) had been born until he (peace be upon him) reached Jerusalem where he saw the remains of Sulayman's Temple. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was then raised to the Seven Heavens where he witnessed many of his Lord's Signs, and there he (peace be upon him) was also granted an honor that had never ever been granted to anyone before or after him.

On his return from this miraculous journey, Muhammad (peace be upon him) told the people of Makkah about what had happened to him. He (peace be upon him) gave them a very detailed and accurate description of everything he had seen. He even described to them a caravan that he had seen on the way and that had lost one of its camels.

The people of Quraysh were at first taken by surprise, but on hearing the detailed descriptions of Muhammad (peace be upon him), they realized that he was only speaking the truth. However, they claimed that he was a liar and they continued

hurting him, and conspired to kill him. With this level of animosity towards him, Almighty Allah ordered him (peace be upon him) to migrate to Yathrib where his uncles from Banu an-Najjar were living, and where his parents were buried and where the people also had promised to support and protect him.

At midnight, the Prophet (peace be upon him) departed from his house leaving `Ali ibn Abi Talib sleeping in his bed. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) emerged from his house, he found many young men standing at his door, carrying their swords and waiting for him to come out so that they might kill him. Those young men belonged to various tribes, their aim was to make it impossible for Banu Hashim to avenge murder of Muhammad (peace be upon him). However, Almighty Allah revealed the enemy's intentions to His Prophet. As he came out, the Prophet (peace be upon him) threw a handful of dust upon the men standing at his door while reciting the verse, ﴿*And We have put a barrier before them, and a barrier behind them, and We have covered them up, so that they cannot see.*﴾ (Yasin: 9)

It was very hard for Muhammad (peace be upon him) to leave Makkah. He loved it so much and his heart was strongly attached to it. He (peace be upon him) addressed Makkah as he was leaving, "*By Allah, you are the most beloved of Allah's countries to me, and if your people had not forced me to leave you, I would not have left you.*"

Those sincere words uttered by Muhammad (peace be upon him) expressed how much he loved Makkah. He (peace be upon him) loved it because it was the land of his fathers and grandfathers, the land where he spent his childhood and youth, the land that witnessed the first revelation that had been sent

down upon him, the land from where he had started his Night Journey to the Seven Heavens and above all, it was the holy land where Allah's House existed.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) went to the house of his Companion, Abu Bakr ibn Quhafah, who was accompanying him on his journey to Yathrib, and with them went `Abdullah ibn Urayqit.

When the young men standing at Muhammad's door woke up and shook off the dust from their heads, they were perplexed. They blamed each other for sleeping but could only whisper lest Muhammad hear them. Upon finding `Ali ibn Abi Talib asleep in Muhammad's bed, they could no longer conceal or suppress their amazement and anger. They were like the clever hunter who delved into the desert searching for a prey, and suddenly a dust storm blew and caused him to be blind. Consequently, he lost his prey as well as his way to come back. Perhaps some of those young men realized that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was right, and wished to migrate to Yathrib to embrace Islam.

After the Muslims' migration to Yathrib, which was later renamed the Prophet's City or al-Madinah al-Munawwarah, Quraysh did not cease its endeavors to hurt Muhammad and his Companions and supporters. Quraysh was afraid that Muhammad's supporters might increase in number by time, making it difficult for them to crush him and his *Da`wah*. As a result of this, the Muslims were involved in a number of battles with the disbelievers of Makkah. Some of these battles were called *Saraya*[1] like those led by Hamzah ibn `Abd al-Muttalib,

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1. Small army units sent by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) for *jihad*, without his participation in it.

`Ubaydah ibn al-Harithah and `Abdullah ibn Jahsh. The larger battles were called *Ghazawat*[1] like *Ghazwat* Badr on the second of Ramadan 2 A.H., where the Muslims had achieved a great victory over the polytheists - Bilal killed Umayyah ibn Khalaf; Mu`adh killed Abu Jahl ibn Hisham; and many of the chiefs of Makkah were taken captive. There was also *Ghazwat* Uhud, which taught the Muslims how to be fully obedient to the Prophet (peace be upon him). In this *Ghazwah*, the Prophet's uncle Hamzah was killed by Wahshi al-Habashi and his death was a source of joy to Hind bint `Utbah who sought to kill him to avenge her brother.

Thus, that was how the conflict between the Muslims and the disbelievers had proceeded. This conflict proved that goodness eventually overcomes evil.

1. Large army units with the Propheet himself leading the army.

(21)

The people of Yathrib were pleased with Muhammad (peace be upon him) who guided them to the path of the Truth. The Prophet (peace be upon him), on the other hand, was more pleased with them as they supported, advocated and sustained him. Moreover, al-Ansar[1] heroically supported and stood up for their brothers; al-Muhajirun[2]. The Prophet (peace be upon him) managed to bridge the gap between the two great tribes; al-Aws and al-Khazraj. Thus, all of them lived in love and peace, except for what the Jews maliciously conspired; but Almighty Allah kept the Believers safe.

In spite of the Prophet (peace be upon him) being in al-Madinah, his mind was always preoccupied with thoughts of Makkah, and he longed for it. He (peace be upon him) recalled some of his lovely memories of his wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu Talib. He recollected even those days that witnessed his people's persecution against him and his Companions. Muhammad (peace be upon him) used to supplicate to his Lord,

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1. The Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) from the inhabitants of al-Madinah who embraced and supported Islam and who received and entertained the Muslim emigrants who migrated from Makkah.
2. A term used for all those converts to Islam who migrated with the Prophet (peace be upon him) from Makkah to al-Madinah.

"O Allah! Make me love al-Madinah as you made me love Makkah. May Allah bless it for us."

Umm al-Mu'minin `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) used to say, "Except for Allah ordered us to emigrate to al-Madinah, I would choose to reside forever in Makkah. I do not see the sky near to the land except in Makkah, and I do not feel tranquility in a place save Makkah."

Although all the surrounding conditions aided the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions to love al-Madinah and its people, the Prophet's heart remained attached to Makkah. At times, the Prophet (peace be upon him) would remember it during his prayer towards al-Quds (Jerusalem). Then, there came Allah's Will to make His Prophet feel tranquil and to please the Prophet's Companions. Almighty Allah revealed the following verse, ﴾ *Verily! We have seen the turning of your face towards the heaven. Surely, We shall turn you to a Qiblah (prayer direction) that shall please you, so turn your face in the direction of al-Masjid al-Haram (at Makkah). And wheresoever you people are, turn your faces (in prayer) in that direction. Certainly, the people who were given the Scriptures (i.e. Jews and the Christians) know well that, that (your turning towards the direction of the Ka`bah at Makkah in prayers) is the truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do.* ﴿ (Al-Baqarah: 144)

The change of the *Qiblah* from al-Quds to the *Ka`bah* was after seventeen months following the *Hijrah*.[1] For sure, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and all Muslims were greatly pleased with Allah's Command to turn their faces during prayer towards Allah's House that was built by Ibrahim and Isma`il

1. According to the majority of the narrators.

(peace be upon them). The Jews were extremely disheartened as Muslims turned their faces from al-Quds. Ka`b ibn al-Ashraf did his best to prevent the Muslims from doing so, but none can prevent Allah's Will.

Al-Muhajirun were so elated, as now they would be able to turn their faces and hearts (during the prayers) towards Makkah; the abode of their relatives and friends and the beholder of their innocent childhood. Now, a link existed between al-Muhajirun and the *Ka`bah* in one of the rites of their religion; the prayer. The Muslims lived in al-Madinah but their hearts were in Makkah; they yearned to circumambulate the *Ka`bah* to respond to the call of their grandfather Ibrahim who invited all people to come from every place to perform *Hajj*. Driven by nostalgia and guided by hope, a great desire to visit Makkah overwhelmed Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his Companions.

The events in al-Madinah were favorable to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Muslims; many tribes came to al-Madinah to embrace Islam, and the Muslims succeeded in making Allah's Word superior as they defeated Quraysh and the Jews in many battles. Moreover, Islam was firmly established by rules and the Muslims attained a great status among all the tribes of the Arab Peninsula. All these victories did not make them abandon their utmost hope; to visit Makkah and to circumambulate the House. Seemingly about to be realized, the Prophet (peace be upon him) told them - while they were at the mosque - that he saw a vision that they would enter the Sacred House!

In the sixth year A.H., the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Muslims agreed to head in peace to Makkah to perform the

`*Umrah*. However, the Muslims disagreed concerning their weapons; whether they should enter Makkah armed to safeguard themselves from the perfidy of Quraysh, or leave their weapons to avoid combats at the Sacred House during the Holy Months. Finally, they agreed to march to Makkah without their weapons except their swords in sheaths.

At the beginning of Dhu al-Qa`dah, the Muslims left al-Madinah and began their journey to Makkah. When they arrived at Dhu al-Halifah, they performed *Ihram*(1) and prepared their sacrifice. Then, the pilgrims resumed their journey to Makkah headed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) who rode his camel al-Qaswa'. When they approached Makkah, they recited the words of *Talbiyah*, "I respond to Your Call O Allah ... I respond to Your Call and I am obedient to Your Orders, You have no partner ..."

When Quraysh learnt of the advance of Muhammad (peace be upon him) along with his Companions and the reason behind their journey, they were aroused by confusion and fear. They stubbornly prevented Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his Companions from entering Makkah. In an attempt to instigate other tribes against the Muslims, they alleged that Muhammad (peace be upon him) came to fight them at the Sacred House. The two groups stood their ground; the Muslims wanted to enter Makkah to perform `*Umrah* and Quraysh wanted to prevent them.

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1. A state in which one is prohibited to practice certain deeds that are lawful at other times. When one assumes this state, the first thing one should do is to express mentally and orally one's intention to assume this state for the purpose of performing `*Umrah* or *Hajj*. Then, *Talbiyah* is recited. two sheets of unstitched clothes will be the only clothes one will wear.

However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) arrived at `Asfan and was informed of the heavy concentration of the enemy troops headed by Khalid ibn al-Walid and `Akrimah ibn Abi Jahl; thus, he (peace be upon him) ordered the Muslims to take an alternate route they reached al-Hudaybiyah where they held talks with the tribe of Quraysh. Both groups assigned delegates; among those whom the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent to Quraysh were Farash ibn Umayyah al-Kalbi, Budayl ibn Warqa' and `Uthman ibn `Affan. The delegates of Quraysh were `Urwah ibn Mas`ud, Makr ibn Hafs (the poet) and al-Halabi ibn Zanan who was convinced of the right of the Muslims to enter Makkah; this aroused the anger of his people.

They concluded with the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyah that stated that the Muslims should not enter Makkah in that year, but would be allowed to return the following year.

The Muslims yearned for entering Makkah like the thirsty stranded in a barren desert at midday, and suddenly saw a rain cloud hovering over him; then, it continued its journey without giving him a drop of rain. The thirsty Muslims returned to al-Madinah without seeing the Sacred House. However, this deprivation increased their desire, but patience pacified them.

The following year, the Prophet (peace be upon him) called Muslims to journey to Makkah. About two thousand Muslims along with the Prophet (peace be upon him) began their blessed journey. Pleasure clothed their faces and their eagerness preceded their footsteps. When they reached the outskirts of Makkah, they raised their voices with the words of *Talbiyah*. Their voices echoed as if the whole universe joyfully repeated their blessed words and was in harmony with their submissive tones.

The Muslims entered Makkah in a venerable parade headed by Muhammad (peace be upon him) and `Abdullah ibn Rawahah who reined the camel of the Prophet (peace be upon him). When they reached the Sacred House, the Prophet (peace be upon him) wrapped himself in a mantle covering the left shoulder and leaving the right uncovered so that his right upper arm remained free (to show the enemies their strength) and said, *"Leave your right shoulders uncovered and circumambulate the House ... May Allah have mercy on a man who displays them today as a sign of his might."*[1]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) and the Muslims circumambulated the House; at times they walked and at others they hastened to show the enemies their strength, as Quraysh imagined that the Muslims were struck with fever. The Muslims recalled pleasant memories during their circumambulation, especially the Prophet (peace be upon him) who recalled the day when his people disagreed concerning the Black Stone and how he (peace be upon him) was chosen to be their judge and hence he (peace be upon him) wisely put an end to this disagreement. When they finished circumambulation, they began to perform *Sa`y*[2]. Perhaps, they remembered their blessed grandmother Hajar; the first to perform *Sa`y* between as-Safa and al-Marwah. Then, Bilal mounted the *Ka`bah* and called to prayer; his voice reached all ears even those who hated to hear it.

Quraysh evacuated Makkah and pitched their tents on the top of hills and valleys near Makkah. Some of them mounted the

1. This act became *Sunnah* during circumambulation whether in *Hajj* or *`Umrah*.
2. Pacing seven times between the mountains of as-Safa and al-Marwah in Makkah during the performance of *Hajj* or *`Umrah*.

Mountain of Qabis and observed Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his Companions while performing prayers, circumambulation, *Sa`y*, supplication and *Talbiyah*. The Muslims stayed in Makkah for three days and they hoped to stay longer in this blessed land; but the Prophet (peace be upon him) ordered his Companions to leave, so as not to breach the treaty.

The Muslims left Makkah and returned to al-Madinah. On their way to al-Madinah, the following verse was revealed, ﴿*Indeed Allah shall fulfill the true vision which He showed to His Messenger (peace be upon him) [i.e. the Prophet saw a dream that he has entered Makkah along with his Companions, having their (head) hair shaved and cut short] in very truth. Certainly, you shall enter al Masjid al Haram; if Allah wills, secure, (some) having your heads shaved, and (some) having your head hair cut short, having no fear. He knew what you knew not, and He granted besides that a near victory.*﴾ (Al-Fat-h: 27)

(22)

Surely, that `*Umrah* was a good opening for the Muslims. Their visit to the Inviolable House and their circumambulation of the *Ka`bah* provided them with the spiritual inspiration to achieve more victories. It was not long before many of the people of Makkah visited the Prophet (peace be upon him) declaring their conversion to Islam. Among those people were Khalid ibn al-Walid, `Amr ibn al-`As, `Uthman ibn Talhah - the caretaker of the *Ka`bah* - and others who had been convinced of the religion of Muhammad and whose souls had shined with faith. They found in Islam a beam of light that would radiate in their souls removing the impurity of polytheism and pagan ignorance. Rather, they - becoming a shield of Islam - participated in numerous battles to defend the new religion, such as the Battles of Mu'tah and Tabuk.

In addition, many tribes arrived in al-Madinah announcing their affiliation with the Prophet (peace be upon him). They included the tribes of Sulaym, Ghatafan, Muzaynah, `Abs, Dhibyan and Fazarah, who recognized that Islam would gain supremacy and power. Even Farwah ibn `Amr al-Khuzaymi, one of the Roman leaders, joined up with the Muslims and refused to apostatize Islam despite the Romans' attempt to influence him.

Moreover, the Muslims remained keen on returning to Makkah and the *Ka`bah*. They desired that the Inviolable House and the *Ka`bah* would be for them exclusively. They also sought to clear the *Ka`bah* of all traces of polytheism and idolatry in order that Islam would permanently prevail. That opportunity arrived when Quraysh had breached the treaty of al-Hudaybiyah by supporting the tribe of Bakr in the latter's unexpected assault against the tribe of Khuza`ah that was under the protection of the Muslims. Thus, the Muslims were obliged to support the tribe of Khuza`ah against their enemies; Banu Bakr and their allies of Quraysh. Therefore, the Muslims prepared themselves to conquer Makkah.

The Muslim army proceeded, with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Abu Bakr and `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them), on the eighth of Ramadan in 8 A.H. The army consisted of ten thousand warriors who were joined by a thousand fighters of the tribe of Sulaym, a thousand fighters of the tribe of Muzaynah and many people from al-Ansar and al-Muhajirun. They proceeded through unfrequented ways. However, Quraysh knew that they had went out of al-Madinah heading for Makkah to revenge for Banu Khuza`ah. The people of Quraysh recognized that they had not enough power to confront the Muslim army and that they could not resist it. Thus, they delegated envoys to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to make him change his mind. Also, they denounced their assault against Banu Khuza`ah hoping that it might persuade Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his men to relinquish their intention of conquering Makkah. But the Muslims remained insistent on aiding their allies, purging Makkah of idols and recovering the Inviolable House. As the Almighty had decided to augment the

Muslims' power, many masters of Makkah came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) declaring their adoption of Islam, among whom were al-`Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib, Abu Sufyan ibn al-Harith and `Abdullah ibn Abi Umayyah ibn al-Mughirah.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was greatly pleased with what the Almighty had conferred on him of favor and with what He had granted him of power, which secured a respectable standing among the rest of the Arabs.

Nevertheless, on his way to Makkah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) was preoccupied with something important; he hoped he could achieve victory without bloodshed or loss of life. He (peace be upon him) earnestly supplicated the Almighty to spare him evil conflict.

When he reached Dhi at-Tawa (a place near Makkah), he was surprised and pleased by what he had seen; Quraysh had evacuated Makkah and the *Ka`bah* and retreated to mountains, and hills seeking protection. They turned to the defiles and mountain passes to see what the Muslims would do. The Prophet (peace be upon him) divided the army into four wings, with each wing subdivided into brigades and legions, and remained in the middle along with Abu Bakr and Usamah ibn Zayd. The left wing was led by az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam and planned to enter Makkah through the northern borderline while the right wing, led by Khalid ibn al-Walid, was designed to move into Makkah from the western side. As for the people of al-Madinah who were headed by Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, they were intended to go into Makkah through the western frontiers. Finally, al-Muhajirun - headed by Abu `Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah - were prepared to enter Makkah from the upper sides. When the Muslim army reached

the higher part in front of Hind Mountain, a tent was pitched for the Prophet (peace be upon him) in which he could rest. As soon as he reposed there, many dear memories resurfaced, for the graves of both his beloved wife Khadijah and his uncle Abu Talib were near that place. He wished they had lived longer in order to witness his victory and to rejoice at what the Almighty had conferred on him of favor.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) turned longingly towards the Inviolable House, with the *Ka`bah* in the middle of it, as if it was opening its arms inviting him to purge it from the impurity of polytheism.

The Muslims then entered Makkah from all sides, except for the western one, where some polytheists - led by `Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl - were resisting the Muslim army. Yet, Khalid ibn al-Walid and his soldiers managed to defeat them. Hence they fled leaving the Muslims to enter Makkah.

Among the momentous events that went down in history were the pleasant moments the Muslims experienced when they had entered the Inviolable House, circumambulated the *Ka`bah* and touched the Black Stone. How great is the happiness of the exiled one when he returns to his family and home after a long separation! This was the state of the Muslims while they were circumambulating the *Ka`bah* after a long thirst and yearning over the years. The scent of a redolent breeze infiltrated their hearts, intensifying their faith and pleasure.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) entered the *Ka`bah*, he effaced all the paintings on the walls and then started to hit the idols, one by one, with his staff so that they fell one after the other. The people of Quraysh were greatly stunned. Perhaps they

regretted the falling of the helpless idols, or perhaps - through their sorrow and wonder - the truth dawned upon them; the falsity of glorifying and offering sacrifices to the idols that scattered into pieces in the courtyard of the Mosque. Then, the Muslims gathered the remains and threw them away declaring the end of the era of polytheism, paganism and aberration.

In joyfulness they expressed from the bottom of their hearts, "Truth has come and falsehood has perished. Surely falsehood was certain to perish."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) did not forget the Well of Zamzam which the Almighty made to erupt forth, a long time ago, at the feet of his grandfather Isma`il and which his grandfather `Abd al-Muttalib dug for the second time, to be a drinking fountain for pilgrims over the years. Thus, he (peace be upon him) headed for it and drank of its water. Then, he - along with the Muslims - moved to as-Safa Mountain and walked seven times between it and al-Marwah, just as their grandmother Hajar did when she was looking for water to feed her son Isma`il.

Then, Bilal mounted the roof of the *Ka`bah* to call for prayer:

Come to prayers! Come to prayers!

Come to success! Come to success!

His voice soared in the distant horizon announcing the triumph of Islam and the beginning of a new era for the *Ka`bah*.

As the people of Quraysh were observing what was taking place in the *Ka`bah*, they descended from the mountains and hills and from the defiles and mountain passes declaring their adoption of Islam and entering the Religion of Allah in troops. They were happy that Allah had guided them and purified their

souls of the impurity of polytheism. But they were afraid because they had harmed Muhammad and his Companions, opposed his call to Islam, forced him out of his homeland and prevented him from entering Makkah or the *Ka`bah*; how grave are these offenses which they had committed against him!

When they came to Muhammad (peace be upon him), they hoped for his generosity, but were afraid by the possibility of punishment. As they approached him with hopeful hearts, he met them saying, *"What do you think I am about to do with you?"* They were confused by his statement! They desired that it meant good for them. However, they were also worried; fearing his revenge. Yet, they could only utter, "We say well, and we think well: an honorable brother, and the son of an honorable brother."

I wonder if they recognized the relationship that linked them to Muhammad and, if so, why did they harm and declare themselves enemies to him?!

The people of Quraysh stood silent and submissive waiting for what their brother, and the son of their brother, would do with them. They were crucial moments, which they experienced, anticipating an answer to their question; their hearts pounded. However, the Prophet (peace be upon him), with his radiant smile, said to them, *"Go your way, for you are the freed ones."*

How merciful was the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him)! Of course! Is not he the caller of the religion of tolerance, peace and forgiveness! His nobility and good manners moved him to release those who had hurt him.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) remained in Makkah for fifteen days, during which he would inquire about the conditions

of its people, have the pleasure of meeting them, and discern the joy of conversion to Islam on their faces.

It was on the sixteenth of Shawwal in 8 A.H. that the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions left Makkah, unable to release their gaze from the *Ka`bah*. They were heading for al-Madinah, motivated by hope and guided by the wish to return to Makkah.

(23)

The Muslims maintained their bond with Makkah after conquering it. Al-Madinah may have been the political capital of the Muslim state, but Makkah was the sacred city - home to the Honorable *Ka`bah*, and the center of pilgrimage. Its status was elevated after the Prophet (peace be upon him) had purified it of idols and the remains of polytheism.

By the ninth year A.H. (which followed the year of the Conquest), Muslims had to perform pilgrimage; one of the pillars of Islam. As the Prophet (peace be upon him) was occupied with receiving delegations from different places; from at-Ta'if, Yemen, Bahrain and Oman, and with sending envoys to other countries to call their people to Islam, he delegated Abu Bakr to command the pilgrimage. After the procession of pilgrims had set out from al-Madinah, revelation was sent down from the Almighty declaring definite bases for treating the polytheists.

What is important here is the verses relevant to the affairs of pilgrims, the *Ka`bah* and Makkah:

- Allah, along with his Messenger, is free from the polytheists, except those who repented and converted to Islam; otherwise,

they would suffer a painful torment. Allah, the Almighty, says, ﴾*And a declaration from Allah and His Messenger to mankind on the greatest day (of pilgrimage) that Allah is free from (all) obligations to the polytheists and so is His Messenger. So if you (polytheists) repent, it is better for you, but if you turn away, then know that you cannot escape (from the Punishment of) Allah. And give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful torment to those who disbelieve.*﴿ (At-Tawbah: 3)

- To the ones who had a covenant with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and did not breach their covenant or support anyone against him, the Muslims would keep their covenant until its term expires. Allah, the Almighty, says, ﴾*Except those of the polytheists with whom you have a treaty, and who have not subsequently failed you in naught, nor have supported anyone against you. So fulfill their treaty to them to the end of their term. Surely Allah loves Al- Muttaqun (the pious).*﴿ (At-Tawbah: 4)
- When the Sacred Months, in which the Almighty has forbidden fighting, have passed, the Muslims would have the right to fight the polytheist until they embrace Islam and perform its ceremonies. The Almighty says, ﴾*Then when the Sacred Months (the 1st, 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islamic calendar) have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and prepare for them in each and every ambush. But if they repent and perform As-Salat (prayers), and give Zakat, then leave their way free. Verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.*﴿ (At-Tawbah: 5)
- The polytheists are an impurity; thus, they should not come near the Sacred Mosque or circumambulate the *Ka`bah* after that year. Allah, the Almighty, says, ﴾*O you who believe (in*

Allah's Oneness and in His Messenger Muhammad)! Verily, the polytheists are Najas (impure). So let them not come near the Sacred Mosque (at Makkah) after this year, and if you fear poverty, Allah will enrich you if He will, out of His Bounty. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. ﴾ (At-Tawbah: 28)

Thus, the Prophet (peace be upon him) sent `Ali ibn Abi Talib to catch up with the procession of pilgrims in order to proclaim what had been revealed to him. When `Ali reached Makkah, the Muslims were carrying out the rituals of the pilgrimage. Then, he started to proclaim what was revealed of the *surah* (chapter) of at-Tawbah and invite them to apply it.

The season of pilgrimage ended and Abu Bakr and the Muslims returned to al-Madinah. By the closing days of Dhu al-Qa`dah in the tenth year A.H., the Prophet (peace be upon him) led the Muslims on pilgrimage, known as the Farewell Pilgrimage. The Prophet (peace be upon him) taught the Muslims the ceremonies, rites and the practices of pilgrimage. He would also preached to them in many situations and places, highlighting the teachings of Islam and its precepts and calling for the forbiddance of fighting in the Sacred Months in Makkah, the *Ka`bah* and the Sacred Mosque. He (peace be upon him) declared that usury and shuffling of a Sacred Month are forbidden. He enjoined Muslims to treat women well.

During the Farewell Pilgrimage, the Almighty revealed the following verse, ﴿ *This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But as for him who is forced, with no inclination to sin, then surely, Allah is Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.* ﴾ (Al-Ma'idah: 3).

Thereafter, the Prophet (peace be upon him) returned to al-Madinah and continued to spread his call and the teachings of his religion until he passed away on Monday, 12 Rabi` al-Awwal, 11 A.H. (632 A.C.). After, the Prophet's (peace be upon him) death, the Muslims chose Abu Bakr as-Siddiq[1] as the Caliph. Abu Bakr led Muslims through the path initiated by the Prophet (peace be upon him). After Abu Bakr's death, `Umar[2] assumed Caliphate, then `Uthman[3], and then, `Ali ibn Abi Talib[4].

History has accurately recorded that the Rightly Guided Caliphs cared for Makkah, the *Ka`bah* and the Sacred House. Abu Bakr as-Siddiq built a fence around the Sacred Mosque separating it from the houses surrounding it. As for `Umar ibn al-Khattab, he bought some of the surrounding houses, redefined the frontiers of the Sanctuary of Makkah[5] and set landmarks, on one-meter-high stones on both sides of the road, in five directions:

1. At-Tan`im: (in the North) six kilometers from Makkah.
2. Adah (in the South) twelve kilometers from Makkah.
3. Al-ju`ranah: (in the East) sixteen kilometers from Makkah.

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1. His Caliphate spanned the period between 11:13 A.H. (634-644 A.C.).
2. His Caliphate spanned the period between 13:23 A.H. (634-644 A.C.).
3. His Caliphate spanned the period between 23:35 A.H. (644-656 A.C.).
4. His Caliphate spanned the period between 35:40 A.H. (656-660 A.C.).
5. These frontiers were known since the era of Ibrahim as Jibril had showed them to him. They were redefined in the era of Qusayy, (then) at the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) after the Conquest of Makkah, (then) at the time of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, then during the reign of Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Suyan and then during the role of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan.

4. Wadi Nakhlah: (in the North-east) fourteen kilometers from Makkah.

5. Ash-Shumaysi (al-Hudaybiyah): (in the West) fifteen kilometers from Makkah.

Furthermore, `Umar ibn al-Khattab took care of the *Ka`bah*, adorning it with silk brocades brought from Egypt(1). `Uthman ibn` Affan, also, bought some houses around the *Ka`bah* and attached them to it so that it would have room for the increasing numbers of congregations and pilgrims due to the expansion of the Muslim state. In addition, he increased the height of the fence separating the Mosque from the surrounding houses. He roofed the Mosque and made porticos for it to protect the visitors against the burning heat of the sun.

By the time `Ali ibn Abi Talib assumed Caliphate, there commenced a new historical stage, the features of which would manifest through the following political events. The consequences of these events would impact on the *Ka`bah* and the House (as will be declared later).

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1. During the Caliphate of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, the Arabs - led by `Amr ibn al-`As - conquered Egypt in 21 A.H. (641 A.C.).

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The seed of Islam was sowed in the barren land of Makkah and it began to grow and thrive. The enemies of the new religion tried hard to eliminate this seed and prevent its flourishing, but they could not; as Almighty Allah wanted it to grow. The Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions devoted themselves to nurturing the young plant; this caused rage among the disbelievers. Days passed and that young plant grew into a towering, fruitful, verdant, luxuriant tree; offering its shade and fruits to those who sought refuge from the dangers of polytheism and deviation.

Events occurred successively thereafter; many of the people of Makkah believed with Muhammad (peace be upon him) and migrated to al-Madinah, and the Muslims conquered Makkah and purified its land. Subsequently, Islam's dominance prevailed over the Arabian Peninsula and its surrounding area.

At the time of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, the tree of Islam flourished even further, extending its shade, but disagreement arose among those who enjoyed its shade. Some of them tried to possess it and rule over the others. According to history, disharmony transpired after the assassination of `Uthman ibn `Affan, as some of his supporters and relatives accused `Ali ibn

Abi Talib of inciting his assassination and they demanded him punish the assassinators. History further relates to us Abu Sufyan's enmity towards the Prophet and his *Da`wah* and the hostility that existed between Hashim (`Ali's grandfather) and Umayyah (Mu`awiyah's grandfather)[1], which extended to their successors `Ali and Mu`wiyah.

In 35 A.H. (656 A.C.), many Muslims appointed `Ali ibn Abi Talib as Caliph. Once he assumed power, he deposed many rulers who were `Uthman's relatives. In response, some Muslims revoked their appointments such as: Az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam, `Ubadah ibn as-Samit and Talhah ibn `Abdullah. They demanded `Ali ibn Abi Talib punish the assassinators of `Uthman, but he could not.

Consequently, a battle (Al-Jamal) took place, witnessed by the Mother of the Believers `A'ishah in 36 A.H., in which `Ali achieved victory over the opposers. As a result, many Muslims of Makkah, al-Madinah, al-Basrah and al-Kufah recognized `Ali as the Caliph. However, Mu`awiyah (the ruler of Damascus) refused to recognize `Ali. Thus, `Ali mobilized the troops and decided to fight Mu`awiyah. The two armies met at Siffin (Dhu al-Hijjah, 36 A.H.), and `Ali was about to achieve victory, when the supporters of Mu`awiyah put the Ever-Glorious Qur'an at the arrowheads, i.e. they wanted it to judge between them.

Both parties agreed to arbitration; `Ali ibn Abi Talib chose Abu Musa al-Ash`ari who declared to depose `Ali; and

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1. The reason behind this hostility was that each one of them (Hashim and Umayyah) boasted that he was the most honorable and venerated and they asked a priest to judge. He judged that Umayyah was the most honorable and venerated; causing Hashim to depart for the Levant.

Mu`wiyah ibn Abi Sufyan chose `Amr ibn al-`As who declared Mu`awiyah's right to be the Caliph.

The parties resumed the battle. Unexpectedly, `Abdullah ibn al-Muljam (one of al-Khwarij[1]) murdered `Ali ibn Abi Talib in 40 A.H. Thus, the Muslims appointed his son al-Hasan as Caliph; but al-Hasan relinquished the Caliphate to Mu`awiyah who established the Umayyad Caliphate (41-132 A.H. - 660-750 A.C.) and transformed the Islamic ruling system into a monarchy.

Surely, the circumstances that the Muslims lived in following the assassination of `Uthman had a clear impact on Makkah and the *Ka`bah*. Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan assumed power in 41 A.H., then he was succeeded by his son Yazid in 60 A.H. (680 A.C.). But, `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr refused to recognize Yazid as the Caliph and sought refuge in the *Ka`bah* with many of the people of al-Kufah, al-Basrah, Egypt and Hims who supported him. Thus, Yazid sent an army headed by Muslim ibn `Uqbah, who was the ruler of al-Madinah, to bring `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr in chains to Damascus. Muslim, however, died before he reached Makkah, and he was succeeded by al-Hussayn ibn Numayr.

Al-Hussayn arrived in Makkah hoping to fulfill his task; but `Abdullah refused to subject to al-Hussayn. Asma' bint Abi Bakr, `Abdullah's mother, encouraged him saying, "O Son! Lead a noble life or a noble death. Do not enable Banu `Umayyah (the Umayyad) to seize you."

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1. A sect of Muslims who revolted against `Ali ibn Abi Talib after they had fought under him at the battle of Siffin due to his approval for at-Tahkim (Arbitration).

`Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr sought refuge in the *Ka`bah* and pitched tents for his supporters around it, but, the sanctity of the place did not prevent al-Hussayn from besieging the *Ka`bah*. Then, he ordered his soldiers to mount the nearby hills and strike the *Ka`bah* with the catapult. Consequently, some of its walls collapsed and its cover was burned.

Many Muslims shouted, "O Hussayn! Woe to you! Do you violate Allah's House?!"

Suddenly, some parts of the Black Stone were scattered because of the successive strikes of the catapult. The Muslims painfully cried, "O Ibn Mu`awiyah! Woe to you. You breached the pledge of Allah's Prophet when you sent some villains to demolish and burn the *Ka`bah*. Did you not feel satisfied with what your criminals did with one of the Prophet's two grandsons (Al-Husayn ibn `Ali) in Karbala'?! By Allah! It is a treachery that Arabs will remember forever as a scandal to Banu Umayyah."

A man appeared and addressed his people, "Did you not hear the Prophet (peace be upon him) who said on the day following the Conquest of Makkah, *'Almighty Allah has declared Makkah as a sacred place; so it is not permissible for any person believing in Allah and the Last Day to shed blood in it, or lop a tree in it. If anyone seeks a concession on the basis of fighting of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him), tell him that Allah permitted His Messenger, but not you, and He gave him permission only for an hour on one day, and its sacredness was restored on the very day like that of yesterday. Let him who is present convey the information to him who is absent.'*"

People in Makkah supplicated to Allah, the Almighty, to save His House from the men of Yazid and al-Hussayn as He saved it previously from Abrahah and the people of Tubba`.

Al-Hussayn continued to besiege the *Ka`bah* until he was informed that Yazid ibn Mu`awiyah passed away. Thus, al-Hussayn and his men stopped fighting and returned to the Levant.

This aggressive attitude aroused grudge and hostility against Yazid and Banu Umayyah. Thus, many Muslims such as `Abdullah ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib and many of the people of al-Kufah, al-Basrah, Yemen and Hims appointed `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr as a Caliph. However, the people of the Levant refused to pledge allegiance to him.

People disagreed concerning the *Ka`bah* - a group held the opinion that they had to demolish it and rebuild it; another group opined that only the damaged walls had to be repaired. `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, Jabir ibn `Abdullah and `Ubayd ibn `Amr held the opinion that it would be better to demolish and rebuild it. `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr said, "By Allah, none would accept to patch the house of his parents, so how dare I patch Allah's House!"

However, `Abdullah ibn `Abbas held the view that it would be better to repair its walls. He said, "I fear that the next generations will come to demolish and rebuild it many times; this may violate Allah's House."

People acceded to Ibn az-Zubayr's opinion; thus, the Muslims had to demolish the *Ka`bah*. They began to remove the ruins and the remains and they set a wooden fence around the *Ka`bah* allowing the pilgrims to circumambulate the House. The

treasures of the *Ka`bah* were transferred to the house of `Uthman ibn Shaybah (the servant of Allah's House). As for the Black Stone, Ibn az-Zubayr covered it with a piece of silk brocade and put it in Dar an-Nadwah.

The Muslims gathered the required stones to rebuild the *Ka`bah* from many mountains such as Hira', Thabir, al-Maqta`, Halhalah, Khandamah, etc.

Now, who would begin to demolish the *Ka`bah*?!

Many of the attendants retreated, trembling with fear and some of them left Makkah and escaped into at-Ta'if, Mina and the surrounding hillsides lest Almighty Allah would inflict torment on them.

The Muslims looked at each other, each pondering, "Who will begin to demolish the *Ka`bah*?" Perhaps, `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr remembered the courage of al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah who was the first to demolish the *Ka`bah* when Quraysh intended to rebuild it five years before the advent of Islam. Thus, he held his axe and mounted the *Ka`bah.* He pronounced the Name of Allah and began to pull down the walls of the *Ka`bah.* When the Muslims saw the scattered stones, they felt pity for him and began to supplicate to the Almighty.

Time passed and `Abdullah remained in a good state; thus, the people of Makkah gathered enough courage to help him. They did their best until they reached a set of stones pressed tightly together in the shape of humps; `Abdullah ibn Muti` al-`Adawi tried to move this set of stones with his axe, but all the attendants felt the mountains of Makkah tremble. They shed tears and realized that this set of stones was the foundation of

the House that was raised by Ibrahim and Isma`il (peace be upon them). Therefore, they had to leave the set of stones as they were and begin to rebuild the *Ka`bah*.

`Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr remembered what his aunt, Umm al-Mu'minin `A'ishah, told him about the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to her; the Prophet (peace be upon him) addressed `A'ishah, *"O `A'ishah! Were your nation not close to the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance, I would have had the Ka`bah demolished and would have included in it the portion which had been left, and would have made it level with the ground and would have made two doors for it, one towards the east and the other towards the west; one for entrance and the other for exit."*

Thus, `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr began to rebuild the *Ka`bah* according to the description of Umm al-Mu'minin `A'ishah. Starting their blessed work, Ibn az-Zubayr and the Muslims were ecstatic, repeating the same supplication of Ibrahim and his son while building Allah's House, *"Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us. Verily! You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knower."* Ibn az-Zubayr added about ten cubits to its length, making it twenty-seven cubits and, also, about ten cubits to its breadth. He set up a roof and made two doors one to be the entrance and the other one to be the exit as the Prophet (peace be upon him) hoped. As for the Black Stone that was cracked into three parts, Ibn az-Zubayr sealed it with strings of silver, then, he ordered his son, `Abbad, and Jubayr ibn Shaybah to place it during the noon prayer.

When some of the leaders of Makkah raged that az-Zubayr did not give them the chance to share in this honor (to place the Black Stone), he pacified them saying that he feared disagreement; and they accepted his justification.

Ibn az-Zubayr took an interest in the Sacred House around the *Ka`bah*; he increased its area, established porticos with marble columns, constructed more doors, and flattened the floor and covered it with stones. Furthermore, he placed back the treasures of the *Ka`bah*, perfumed its walls with musk and ambergris, covered it with silk brocade, adorned its doors with gold and made its keys of pure gold.

`Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr realized Allah's Favor and Grace upon him and his people, so he called people to perform *`Umrah* to thank the Almighty and to be reunited. It was momentous to see the Muslims in accord and united under one banner while circumambulating the *Ka`bah* and performing *Sa`y* between as-Safa and al-Marwah. What a wonderful image!

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Doves returned to the sky of Makkah hovering over the Sacred House; they were ecstatic to find peace again in the *Ka`bah*. Makkah became a great oasis of serenity to which the pilgrims, travelers and caravans sought refuge.

Ibn az-Zubayr proclaimed a high status among the Muslims following the withdrawal of the troops of al-Hussayn and his efforts in rebuilding the *Ka`bah* as the Prophet (peace be upon him) hoped. He gained many followers and supporters due to his merits such as his vast knowledge, piety, righteousness, asceticism, leading an austere life and performing supererogatory prayers and fasting. The pilgrims of the Levant realized the disparities between `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr and the Umayyad Caliph who led a prodigal life full of song, amusement, lavish expenditures and haughtiness.

Therefore, many Muslims in different regions such as the Arabian Peninsula, Yemen, Iraq and Egypt appointed Ibn az-Zubayr as Caliph. The caliphate of Mu`awiyah II (Ibn Yazid) and Marawan ibn al-Hakam was confined to the Levant; thus, some historians regarded Ibn az-Zubayr as the Commander of the Believers at that time. Many parties supported Ibn az-Zubayr

during his conflict with Banu Umayyah such as al-Khawarij al-Azariqah (a sect of al-Khawarij) and Shi`ah. Also, the Negus sent him a division that played an important role in guarding and rebuilding the *Ka`bah*.

When the Umayyad Caliph `Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan assumed power in 65 A.H. (685 A.C.), he felt that the power of Ibn az-Zubayr could threaten the Umayyad Caliphate; thus, he did his best to diminish his authority. `Abd al-Malik sent an army towards Makkah, headed by al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi. The two armies met outside Makkah near `Arafah, and al-Hajjaj, who received reinforcements from the Umayyad Caliph, achieved victory over the army of Ibn az-Zubayr. Then, al-Hajjaj gave Ibn az-Zubayr three choices: to leave to wherever he wants, to be sent in chains to the Levant, or to resume fighting till the last breath. Ibn az-Zubayr chose the third option and, subsequently, led his people towards the *Ka`bah* seeking refuge. Upon hearing this, al-Hajjaj and his men besieged the *Ka`bah* and were ready to attack it with the catapult.

This incident was in Dhu al-Qa`dah (one of the Sacred Months) 72 A.H. and the pilgrims began to arrive successively in Makkah. Fearing that people might feel unsafe, `Abdullah ibn `Umar ibn al-Khattab ordered al-Hajjaj not to attack the *Ka`bah* during the Sacred Months in order not to prevent the pilgrims from performing their rituals. Al-Hajjaj waited for the end of the pilgrimage; however, the pilgrims did not manage to stay the appointed time in `Arafah, as the army of al-Hajjaj was camping there.

Then, the troops of al-Hajjaj severely struck the *Ka`bah* and brutally attacked the men of Ibn az-Zubayr. Moreover, when

thunderbolts attacked the men of al-Hajjaj, they did not stop their striking, to the extent that the sound of their strikes was louder than that of the thunderbolts.

Due to the successive strikes of al-Hajjaj, many of the followers and the supporters of Ibn az-Zubayr abandoned him and joined the army of al-Hajjaj. Furthermore, the two sons of Ibn az-Zubayr, Hamzah and Khubayb, tried to convince their father to stop fighting and seek reconciliation but he refused; thus, they joined the army of al-Hajjaj.

Ibn az-Zubayr sought the advice of his mother saying, "O my mother! People walked out on me; even my two sons. I have nothing but a few men and the people offered me treasures. What is your opinion?"

His mother painfully replied, "O my son! You are the better to decide. If you are convinced that you are right, you have to fight your best and do not surrender to Banu Umayyah. But, if you want the worldly treasures; then, what a detestable man you are!"

He said, "I fear that they will mutilate me following my assassination."

She answered him, "What will be harmful for you following your death?!"

The words of Asma' bint as-Siddiq inspired him. He left her while yelling, "I do not want worldly treasures. I only want martyrdom." Then he returned to his men and resumed fighting. Suddenly, a stone struck his head and he began to bleed. He tried to rise, but he could not. The enemies aimed their arrows at him and managed to kill him in Jumada al-Aula 73 A.H. As Ibn

az-Zubayr previously expected, al-Hajjaj cut off his head following his death and crucified him at al-Hajjun (a place near Makkah). Al-Hajjaj was ecstatic and announced the good news to his master `Abd al-Malik, while the body of the great martyr remained crucified before the passers-by.

Asma' bint Abi Bakr and the people of Makkah were greatly saddened because of what happened to Ibn az-Zubayr. They might have cursed al-Hajjaj; also, they might have recalled what happened to the prophet Yahya (peace be upon him) when the men of Herod cut off his head and offered it on a golden dish to Salome and her mother Herodias.

Al-Hajjaj sent a messenger to Asma' asking her to come to get the corpse of her son; the messenger said, "Al-Hajjaj orders you to come to him, otherwise he will send you the one who can bring you by your horns."

Asma' answered him, "By Allah, I will not come until he sends me that miserable one who can do that."

Al-Hajjaj came to her and said, "Did you not take your son, Allah's enemy, as an example?!"

Asma' angrily answered him, "You spoilt his worldly life and your Hereafter. I was informed that you used to call him, 'O the son of Dhat an-Nitaqayn (the owner of the two belts).' By Allah, I am Dhat an-Nitaqayn; one of the two belts was for the journey food for Allah's Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companion Abu Bakr, and the other for me ... By Allah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) told us that the tribe of Thaqif has a liar and an aggressor; we were previously acquainted with the liar, and surely you are the aggressor."

Al-Hajjaj could do nothing but leave her, possibly feeling the cruelty of his crime. Then, Asma' washed the corpse of her son and buried him.

Al-Hajjaj did not feel satisfied with what he did with `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr during his life, as the fire of envy was still flaming in his heart. He sought to change the style of the *Ka`bah* that Ibn az-Zubayr previously built, according to the words of the Prophet (peace be upon him) that were related on the authority of `A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) - seeking to eliminate his exploits forever. Thus, he sent for `Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan in Damascus to inform him about the changes that Ibn az-Zubayr had done when he rebuilt the *Ka`bah*. He forged the facts and deceived his master; thus, he took permission to restore the old style of the *Ka`bah*.

Al-Hajjaj closed the western door of the *Ka`bah* and demolished the wall next to the Black Stone and rebuilt it; moreover, if he had the chance to diminish its height, he would have done so. He changed the style that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had hoped for and that was built by Ibn az-Zubayr.

Days passed and the Almighty ordained to reveal the evil intentions of al-Hajjaj and to expose his aggressive defiance. Once, al-Harith ibn Rabi`ah al-Makhzumi, who was one of the great scholars at that time, came to Damascus, and `Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan asked him about the authenticity of the Prophet's words that were related by `A'ishah concerning the style of the *Ka`bah*. Thus, al-Harith affirmed that the narration was authentic and what Ibn az-Zubayr had done was correspondent to the Prophet's hope.

Only then, the Umayyad Caliph realized the truth and was so disheartened to know that al-Hajjaj deceived him. He then pronounced his well-known statement, "I wished that I let the father of Khubayb. I am so remorseful concerning what happened." Consequently, he gathered some scholars and consulted them about the matter and he declared his sincere desire to restore the style that was built by Ibn az-Zubayr. But, the scholars advised him not to do so saying, "O Commander of the Believers! Allah's House is not a toy at the hands of the kings to demolish, alter and rebuild it whenever they desire."

`Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan and the Umayyad Caliphs who succeeded him sought forgiveness for the awful sins of al-Hajjaj. Thus, `Abd al-Malik ibn Marawan increased the height of the wall of the Sacred House and roofed it with teak, adorned the columns with gold, repaired the *Ka`bah* following a torrential stream and increased the area of the Sacred Mosque. The Caliph al-Walid ibn `Abd al-Malik (86 A.H.-96 A.H.) ordered the ruler of Makkah, Khalid ibn `Abdullah al-Qasri to renew the two doors of the *Ka`bah*, the drains and the corners. Also, he asked him to floor the *Ka`bah* with marble, to roof the Sacred Mosque with the embellished teak and to add more balconies.

(26)

History bears testimony to the rise and decline of many nations; the kings who reigned and then lost their crowns and their privileges and sometimes their lives as well.

This law of nature is evident in the case of Banu Umayyah - their era dawned with a victory over al-`Alawiyyun[1], then sealed with their defeat at the hands of al-`Abbassiyyun[2], the cousins of al-`Alawiyyun, in the Battle of az-Zab al-Akbar, near Musil in 750 A.C. The last Caliph of the Umayyad Caliphate, Marawan ibn Muhammad, fled to Egypt where he was killed, concluding the rule of Banu Umayyah. From that moment, the Abbasid Caliphate started its era and moved the capital to Baghdad. Their Abbasid Caliphate lasted five centuries.

Al-`Abbassiyyun were very concerned with expanding and fortifying their country as well as the progress of the various aspects of civilization. However, they were also interested in the development of Makkah, and the *Ka`bah* and the Sacred Mosque though they were very far from their capital Baghdad.

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1. The descendants and followers of `Ali ibn Abi Talib.
2. The descendants of al-`Abbas, the paternal uncle of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Al-Mansur Abu Ja`far[1], the second Caliph, made expansions in the area of the Sacred Mosque from the northern western direction, doubling it in size. He also adorned it with gold, mosaic and sculptures, and surrounded it with marble columns. He built the minaret of Banu Sahm, covered the walls of *Hijr* Isma`il with marble, and built a roof for the Well of Zamzam.

Then, when Muhammad al-Mahdi ibn al-Mansur[2] arrived, he was greatly concerned about the Sacred Mosque, so he bought many of the houses surrounding it. He made expansions from the northern, eastern and western directions, accentuating the *Ka`bah*'s central position in the Mosque. He also built three rows of marble and stone columns with roofs built from teak. He established four wooden buildings for performing the prayers and specified a building for each of the four *Madh-habs* (the four schools of *Fiqh*). All these missions were carried out by Yaqtin ibn Musa by authority of a command from Muhammad al-Mahdi. Yaqtin ibn Musa worked on providing the pilgrims with water along the ways that lead to Makkah. He also replaced the old cover of the *Ka`bah* with a new one. These missions were accomplished in the era of Musa al-Mahdi in 167 A.H.

Harun ar-Rashid[3] used to go to Makkah on foot in the season of pilgrimage and to take upon himself the expenses of the pilgrims with him. In 189 A.H., when he performed *`Umrah,* he consolidated the Black Stone with silver, and increased the

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1. His Rule was from 136:158 A.H.
2. He was called al-Mahdi because he was hoped to be the expected Mahdi who is believed to appear at the end of time and cause justice to prevail on earth.
3. He ruled from the year 170:193 A.H.

depth of the Well of Zamzam by 9 cubits. Moreover, he was concerned with providing the pilgrims with the water they need.

Harun ar-Rashid contemplated pulling down the *Ka`bah* and restoring it to its former state during the time of Ibn az-Zubayr. However, he consulted imam Malik[1], who warned him against such action saying, "O Commander of the Believers, by Allah, do not make the *Ka`bah* a game at the hands of kings - pulling it down whenever they like, and then it will not be appreciated or respected by people anymore."

Thus, Ar-Rashid accepted his advice and left the *Ka`bah* alone as it was.

When Muhammad al-Amin ibn ar-Rashid[2] took over the command of the Islamic State, he covered the door of the *Ka`bah* with sheets of gold that weighed 33000 *mithqals*[3]. He also covered the *Ka`bah* with three layers: with red silk brocade on the day of *Tarwiyah*; with Egyptian linen on the first day of Rajab; and with yellow silk brocade on the twenty-seventh of Ramadan.

The Abbasid Caliph al-Mu'tadid, also, concerned with the Sacred Mosque, built in it a house calling it "Dar an-Nadwah" and named its door "Bab an-Nadwah".

Al-`Abbassiyyun attended to the Sacred Mosque ardently, building many marble and stone columns in it. They were also

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1. He is Malik ibn Anas. He was born in al-Madinah and was the most famous scholar there. He is one of the four imams and his *Madh-hab* is called the Maliki *Madh-hab*. One of his most famous writings is "*Muwatta' Malik*". He died in 179 A.H. and was buried in al-Baqi`.
2. He ruled from 193 to 198 A.H.
3. A *mithqal* equals about 4.25 grams.

concerned with the processions of the pilgrims heading towards Makkah and coming from Egypt, the Levant, Iraq and Persia.

The era of the Abbasid Caliphate started in 132 A.H. and lasted for almost five centuries until 656 A.H. Their strength declined at the end of this era, whereas the non-Arabs, like the Persians, the Turks and the Barmakids, gained more force and control over the Islamic State. This, in turn, encouraged many of the dependant states to seek their independence and many of them succeeded in acquiring it. For instance, there was Ahmad ibn Tulun[1] in Egypt, then the Ikshidid dynasty, and later on Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi. Independence was also achieved by other states like the Tahirid dynasty, the Ghaznavids, the Buwayhiyyah dynasty, the Hamdanid dynasty, the Fatimid Caliphate, the Salajiqah, then the Qarmatians who precipitated traumatic events in the history of Makkah and the Sacred Mosque.

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1. The Turkish governor of Egypt who made himself independent of the Abbasid Arab Caliphate and founded the Tulunid dynasty.

(27)

It was the season of pilgrimage and the pilgrims' voices soared through the sites of Makkah - they came to respond to the call of Ibrahim and Muhammad (peace be upon them) and to seek their Lord's Satisfaction. Their prayers, piercing the air, created an atmosphere of great fear and awe, an atmosphere that prevailed in the Sacred Mosque, all the way through Makkah, Mina and `Arafat and all that is between them and that almost caused the mountains around to tremble out of fear. That was the day of *Tarwiyah.*[1]

The pilgrims were circumambulating around the *Ka`bah* and preparing themselves to go to Mina while calling out loudly, "O Allah! Verily, this Sacred Mosque is Yours and your Prophet's; so we pray to You to prohibit our bodies from fire ... O Allah! Open for us the doors of Your Mercy ... O our Lord! Give us in this world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and save us from the torment of the Fire ... Exalted and Glorified be You, the Lord of Majesty and Bounty ... O Allah! We are asking you to grant us Paradise and its bliss and to guide us to every act and utterance that gets us closer to it, and we seek refuge in You from the Hellfire and from every act or saying that gets us closer to it ..."

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1. It was in 317 A.H.

Then suddenly, a man riding an untamed horse appeared among the rows of pilgrims and was surrounded by a group of his men. The man, who appeared drunk, was whistling aloud and brandishing a sword as if he was about to strike some enemy, and his men around him were doing the same thing.

The man broke his way through the rows of pilgrims who gave him way while repeating fervently, "There is no God but Allah." But, his blaring cry, "O people! Stop saying these words!" was heard by all.

In amazement, fear and grief, the people looked at each other and stared at the man who wanted to prevent them from praying to their Lord. A man then proceeded towards the equestrian and said, "O man! Who are you? And how can you prevent us from ..." Before he could complete his words, the equestrian raised his sword high and struck the man's neck - his head flew off and his body fell upon the ground of the Mosque.

Then, the man declared fiercely, "I am Allah ... I am Allah."

The people were astounded by the words of this strange man who disrupted this great day for them and distracted them from performing its rituals. Some of them were about to stop circumambulation, whereas others went on with their worship, ignoring him. The man continued fiercely, "I am Allah. I create the creatures." Then, with a wave of his sword he killed so many people who were standing close to him, and with great joy he said, "And I annihilate them!"

One of the pilgrims then, driven by his deep faith in Allah and by his courage, approached this foolish and headstrong equestrian and prayed to his Lord saying, "O Allah! We seek refuge in You from polytheism and from dissension."

Another pilgrim followed him saying, "And from bad manners."

However, on hearing this, the deranged equestrian immediately cut off their heads with his sword and cried fiercely, "I am Allah ... I am Allah. I am Abu Tahir, the Qarmatian."

This name had a strong effect upon the people for they soon recollect what the Qarmatians had done five years ago (312 A.H.) with the pilgrims who were returning from Makkah. They remembered how those barbaric people had blocked the pilgrims' way, and how they had killed the men and had taken the women as captives and had stolen their money and luggage.

The Qarmatian then cried back, "Do you not say that this House is a Sacred House and whoever enters it is safe? Then show me how can you be safe from me!"

He then raised his head to the sky and said, "And where are the flocks of birds? It seems that Abrahah was right when he came to pull down the *Ka`bah*, this ancient house."

In response, many people headed towards the *Ka`bah* and in great fervency, they prayed to Allah to save them from this mad apostate and his men. Others tried to exit the Sacred Mosque seeking their own salvation, whereas others went on with circumambulation and prayer as if nothing had happened. This did not deter the Qarmatians. On the contrary, they became fiercer and more insistent. Their leader ordered them, "Arrest those and those. Besiege them! Kill them!"

Mercilessly, and with encouragement from their leader, the Qarmatians went on a rampage. The pilgrims' heads were slain and their bodies were strewn all over the Sacred Mosque. The

wounded screamed and wailed, and with prayers, cursed the wild apostates. The courtyard of the Sacred Mosque turned into a lake of stagnant blood, as if the thirsty earth refused to be quenched by the blood of the innocent martyrs, and the walls of the Mosque were dyed with the red color of blood. The dead bodies accumulated and so the Qarmatians started dragging them to the Well of Zamzam and there they buried them without coffins or prayers. They wanted to pollute the water of the well to prevent the thirsty from drinking it. In protest against such fierce actions, the water of the Well of Zamzam dwindled away.

The Qarmatians were pleased with their actions and their master even more pleased with what he had committed against the Sacred House and its visitors. Still inebriated, he ordered his men to follow the people in all the ravines, alleys and paths of Makkah and to kill whomever they meet. In excessive cruelty, the Qarmatians carried out their master's commands and when they returned to the Sacred Mosque, they found their leader sitting at the door of the *Ka`bah* visualizing building a *Ka`bah* in Hagar (a place) where the people could perform pilgrimage. It was the same ridiculous dream of the people of Tubba` in Yemen, and Abrahah - a dream unfulfilled due to shame and disgrace, or a cause of guidance to the right way.

The Qarmatian, Abu Tahir, then stood up and ordered his men to rip out the door of the *Ka`bah* and to seize all the treasures and jewels in it and the gold on its walls. He then struck the Black Stone with an iron stick and pulled it out of its place.

The Qarmatians returned to their homes, their violation carved in the pages of history.

(28)

Makkah rose to a glorious sunshine that bedecked the city and the surrounding mountains with a beautiful silver cover. When the sun reached its zenith, the weather became, as usual, extremely hot; and by the sunset of that day[1], a huge cloud covered the sky. Ecstatic, the people thought the cloud to be a source of goodness for them. At first, fine gentle raindrops descended, then turned into heavy showers and before long torrential streams ensued.

Undeterred, the pilgrims proceeded with their circumambulation and prayers as if nothing had occurred. It is Allah's Decree that circumambulation around the *Ka`bah* must not cease under any condition; it must not be stopped by night, or by the heat of the sun, or by the cruelty of coldness or by the falling of rain. Allah's House is destined to be permanently filled with those who perform circumambulation and prayers.

The next morning, the heavy rains continued ceaselessly. Helpless, to the people supplicated to the Almighty to protect them against the Heaven's rage and to stop this unusual deluge. It rained heavily upon Makkah for two whole days, relentlessly.

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1. It was 19 Sha`ban of 1039 A.H (1629 A.C.).

When the rain eventually stopped and the sky regained its azure color, the people of Makkah headed hastily towards the *Ka`bah*. It terrified them to see how the rain had turned Allah's Sacred House into a vast sea and had almost reached the top of its lamps[1]. In the middle of the Sacred House, the *Ka`bah* looked like a partially drowned ship, but to their amazement, they found some of the pilgrims still performing circumambulation by swimming around the *Ka`bah*.

The people of Makkah speedily opened the drains, letting the water out. They looked at the *Ka`bah* fearfully, contemplating the inevitable damage. When the water was drained, they found that the northern wall of the *Ka`bah* and some parts of its eastern and western walls had collapsed.

The history of the Sacred House and the *Ka`bah* marks the achievements of the era of the Ottoman sovereignty.[2] In 979 A.H., Sultan Sulayman changed the roof of the *Ka`bah*, renewed the Sacred Mosque and replaced the columns of the porticos by marble ones. He assigned the engineer Sanan to perform such tasks, who invited many of the Egyptians to work with him like engineer Ahmad bey al-Misri and Muhammad al-Misri.

In 1020 A.H., Sultan Ahmad took all the necessary measures to repair the walls of the *Ka`bah*. He even considered pulling it down in order to rebuild it with silver and gold, however the scholars strongly refused this idea. Sultan Ahmad was thus forced to abandon his idea and he built only a brass fence around it to protect it.

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1. At that time there were twenty lamps made out of gold in the Sacred House.
2. The Ottomans came to control the Arabian Peninsula at the beginning of the sixth century A.H.

Thus, the people of Makkah found they had no other choice but to inform the Ottoman Sultan[1] of what had happened and to encourage the Muslims everywhere to participate in repairing the damage caused by the torrential rains. The sherif of Makkah and those who were already present hurried with hatchets and large baskets and started to remove the mud, sand, stones and wood from the Sacred Mosque. They established a wooden fence around the *Ka`bah* to protect those who were performing circumambulation and then they sat waiting for the commands of the Ottoman Sultan.

While the Ottoman Sultan was consulting his men about the matter, the Ruler of Egypt, Muhammad pasha al-Albani, did not lose much time and immediately dispatched many engineers and workers to Makkah.

When repairs to the ruined parts of the *Ka`bah* began, the heavy rains resumed, and once again the Sacred Mosque was filled with water and more parts of the *Ka`bah* collapsed. It became clear, then, that any endeavor to repair the ruined walls would be useless and so they had to pull down the *Ka`bah* and rebuild it.

The people started by removing the ruined stones and replacing them with stronger ones. Once they had finished this, they moved on to building process. Many days passed and the people worked diligently day and night, never overcame with exhaustion. They were all very pleased to cooperate and to participate in this great achievement; rebuilding the Sacred House that was favored by Almighty Allah over any other place.

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1. This was in the era of Sultan Murad IV.

As for the Black Stone that was afflicted by some cracks, it was skillfully treated by the engineers who filled the spaces between its particles with a strengthening compound and then bound it with a silver frame. Moreover, the columns were repaired, and the *Hijr* of Isma`il and the roof of the *Ka`bah* was rebuilt.

The Ottomans did not only rebuild the *Ka`bah*, but they were also very much concerned with it and with the Sacred House. For instance, in 1122 A.H. (1710 A.C.), they repaired the Cupola of Zamzam; in 1132 A.H. (1720 A.C.), they repaired the shrine of Ibrahim; in 1140 A.H. (1727 A.C.), they furnished the Sacred Mosque with carved stones; and in 1273 A.H., Sultan `Abd al-Majid sent a golden drain to the *Ka`bah*. They were also interested in improving the path where *Sa`y* is performed.

All the achievements are eternal pages carved in the history of Makkah, the *Ka`bah* and the Sacred Mosque.

(29)

History reveals to us how the Saudis had started their era in that region. The Saudis descended originally from their grandfather Muhammad ibn Su`ud[1] who was related by marriage to Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Wahhab[2], and who helped the latter in propagating Wahhabism.[3]

At first, the Ottomans achieved victory over the Wahhabis, with the help of Muhammad `Ali, the ruler of Egypt at that time, in 1818 A.C. in Ad-Dir`iyyah. At the beginning of the twentieth century, in 1902 A.C., `Abd al-`Aziz Al Su`ud[4] entered Riyadh.

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1. His origin goes back to Rubay`ah ibn Nazar ibn Mudar ibn `Adnan, until Isma`il (peace be upon him).
2. He was born in 1696 A.C. in Najd. He was one of the scholars of Al-Hanabilah (the followers of imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal). He made a contact with Muhammad ibn Su`ud who was the Prince of Ad-Dir`iyyah and he supported him in his method. Su`ud's son then married the daughter of Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Wahhab who gave birth to `Abd al-`Aziz who succeeded his father later on and united his grandfather's religious authority with his father's political authority. He also propagated Wahhabism in many regions of the Arabian Peninsula.
3. This method is built upon absolute monotheism. It rejects visiting the graves of the pious and embracing them as means to seek their content and it considers this as an image of paganism. It believes in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an and the Sunnah as the sources of Islamic legislation and it rejects heresies, wearing of gold and silk and it prohibits smoking and drinking alcohol.
4. He is `Abd Al-`Aziz ibn `Abd ar-Rahman al-Faysal Al Su`ud. He died in 1373 A.H.

He took over Al-Qusaym in 1904; then Al-Ihsa' in 1913; Al-Ha'il in 1921; At-Ta'if in 1924, then Makkah, Jiddah and Al-Hijaz. This forced ash-Sharif Husayn ibn `Ali to leave the country and `Abd al-`Aziz announced himself king of Al-Hijaz. In September 1932, an ordinance was issued to declare the unity of the regions of Najd, Al-Hijaz and `Asir into one kingdom, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Since that day, the Saudis felt it was necessary for them to move with the current of modern civilization that came with the twentieth century. King `Abd al-`Aziz, with his wisdom and strong argument, managed to talk with the conservatives from among the scholars of Al-Hanabilah, who rejected progress and modern civilization considering them as acts of the devil. He persuaded them to embrace modern civilization, expounding the benefits of modern inventions like the radio, the phone and the car. He also convinced them of promoting education and of improving its systems and of introducing the modern sciences.[1]

The development of infrastructure was another feature of progress and civilization that was spurred by the discovery of oil in the east of Saudi Arabia, boasting the Kingdom's economy. The two Sacred Mosques were matters of importance and determination to present their perfect image that reflects their greatness and their great value in the hearts of Muslims all around the world.

With pride and honor, we shall mention here the achievements accomplished by the Saudis in the Sacred Mosque and in the *Ka`bah* both in the era of King `Abd al-`Aziz and that of King Fahd.

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1. Muhammad Husayn Hikal, *Fi Manzil Al-Wahy*.

• The era of king `Abd al-`Aziz (1375-1395 A.H.)

The walls of the *Ka`bah* were repaired and covered with marble from the inside, the roof was fixed and the outside cover of the *Ka`bah*, which used to come from Egypt, was now manufactured in the factories of the Kingdom. The celebration of covering the *Ka`bah* necessitates the attendance of the king, the princes and members of the royal family who carry out the mission of washing the *Ka`bah* and perfuming it with musk and ambergris. Also the Black Stone was reformed and the splinter that had been removed by one of the Persians in 351 A.H. was restored.

As a result of the progress of the various means of transportation, the number of pilgrims and visitors to the Sacred House multiplied every year, necessitating expansions. Thus, many of the houses around the Sacred House were demolished, increasing its area to 160,000 square meters. Its doors increased to twenty-two, and its minarets to seven. The water drains were diverted away from the *Ka`bah*, to prevent the rainwater from reaching the Sacred House.

The path between as-Safa and al-Marwah used to be violated by vehicles and riding animals, and even the houses that were built around it. To rectify things, the ways of transportation were diverted away from this path and the nearby houses and streets were separated from it. Two floors were constructed at a height of 420 meters and each floor was divided into two halves, one for walking to as-Safa and the other for walking to al-Marwah. In the middle between them, there was another path also divided into two, to facilitate the movement of the old and sick in the wheelchairs provided for them.

The height of the Mosque reached 12 meters, and it has eight doors all leading to the outside. In addition to the doors are the balconies that face the *Ka`bah* making it easy for the pilgrims to see it. The Well of Zamzam widened and deepened and its water was carried through pipes to the outside of the Mosque to make it easy for the pilgrims to drink from it.

• The era of King Fahd (1402 A.H)

The achievements, expansions and improvements that took place in the era of King Fahd ibn `Abd al-`Aziz Al Su`ud represent a magnificent period in the history of the two Sacred Mosques. They represent one of the features of progress and civilization in Saudi Arabia and confirm the Kingdom's interest in the Islamic sites. Among the most important achievements that took place in the era of King Fahd, starting from the year 1406 A.H., are widening the Sacred Mosque by adding a new part to it from the region of the small market that falls between the Door of `Umrah and the Door of the King. The area of this part is 76000 square meters divided into three floors. This increases the total area of the Sacred Mosque to 328000 square meters and can now accommodate more than one million visitors.

The expansion process also included building two new minarets at a height of 89 meters, taking the same form of the seven previous minarets. The Sacred Mosque now boosts 9 minarets. To facilitate the process of reaching the surface of expansion, two new buildings with escalators were added, in addition to the old five buildings with escalators.

Also, 492 columns were built in the area of expansion to support the high floors and surfaces and they are all covered

with white marble. The external front of the building was decorated with marble and artificial stones up to the height of 22,57 meters and the floors were covered with marble decorated with Islamic artwork.

Three cupolas, each 12 meters high, were built in the middle of the surface of expansion. The doors and windows are made from conic aluminum and were provided with wooden oriels to be in harmony with the old doors.

The authorities were also concerned with the public utilities, so they built two power plants. The roofs of the Mosque were adorned with lamps that suit its architecture and electric fans were installed in addition to the air-conditioned areas. For the pilgrims to attain the water of the Well of Zamzam easily, a special network of pipes was extended to carry its water to the outside of the Mosque.

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It is a grand host to guests from the four corners of the world. It stood resolute against those who sought to destroy it. It warmly received those who honored it, and salutes those who visit it today. Physically, it is the most central point of the earth; spiritually, it represents the Muslims as a united body, with the Almighty Foremost in our minds. It bears testimony to the Prophets' call to absolute monotheism, and binds nations and tribes invincibly. Its resilience has stood the test of time. This is the Ka`bah - Allah's Sacred House.

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